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ABSTRACT

This document contains 7 papers that evolved from 44 case studies of access to vocational guidance for people at risk of social exclusion in 5 European countries. The following papers are included: "Introduction" (Pamela Clayton); "Access to Vocational Guidance in Italy" (Silvana Greco, Marco Maiello); "Access to Vocational Guidance in Ireland" (Mary Ward, Elmer Kelly); "Access to Vocational Guidance in the United Kingdom" (Pamela Clayton, Paul McGill); "Access to Vocational Guidance in Finland" (Eija Makela, Johanna Hulkko); "Access to Vocational Guidance in the Czech Republic" (Robert Troska, Vavrinec Fojcik, D. Machackova, Lenka Sinorova, Miroslav Kostka, Pamela Clayton); and "Conclusions" (Pamela Clayton). The following are among the topics discussed: the problem of social exclusion; the role of lifelong learning and vocational guidance and counseling in preventing social exclusion; barriers to vocational guidance and what can be done to eliminate them; and educational and labor market policies favoring adult groups at risk of social exclusion. Each report also includes case studies and country-specific recommendations. The bibliography contains 305 references. Appended are the following: lists of case study locations and the case studies by target group; interview schedules; and list of 77 useful Web sites. (MN)

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ACCESS TO VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE FOR PEOPLE AT RISK OF SOCIAL EXCLUSION

Edited by Dr Pamela M Clayton
University of Glasgow

February 1999

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Social exclusion is a problem of which the main victims are the socially excluded themselves. The main result of social exclusion is poverty, and a major cause of poverty is disadvantage on the labour market.
- Many adults are at risk of social exclusion in the contemporary labour market, including those who are currently employed, and especially those in low-paid, unskilled or dangerous jobs. Older men have an extremely high risk of permanent unemployment if made redundant.
- The groups we have chosen to focus on are people living in rural areas or in areas of deprivation; people with physical, psychological or learning disabilities; those whose employment status is insecure and/or who are in low-paid unskilled jobs, with a particular focus on women; homeless people; ex-offenders; ethnic minorities, migrants, refugees, asylum-seekers and Travellers; older workers; and the long-term unemployed.
- All of these groups might benefit from adult vocational information, advice or guidance, whether the outcomes are education/training, employment or a restoration of confidence and self-esteem.
- There is, however, a paucity of such guidance in the countries surveyed.
- Even where good guidance services exist, there are often access problems: those who could most benefit from the service are the least likely to use it.
- Nevertheless there are guidance agencies which exemplify good practice and creative ideas in enhancing access to their services. We present 44 case studies of such services.
- We conclude that the following are the most important ways of enhancing access:
    - marketing, both of specific services and of guidance
    - active collaboration with other relevant agencies
    - taking the service to where the people are
    - preparing people to join the mainstream
    - creating a user-friendly environment
    - delivering a high-quality service
- We recommend to guidance services that they incorporate into their normal practice proactive methods of enhancing access.
- We recommend to policy-makers that they:
    - ensure adequate provision of adult vocational guidance
    - ensure that services are properly funded, so that they can enhance access, raise the skills and qualifications of their staff and collect systematic feedback from clients in order to evaluate the quality of the service
    - provide the appropriate support services, most notably affordable, good-quality childcare

ACRONYMS

AEGIS	Adult Educational Guidance Initiative Scotland (United Kingdom)
AGM	Annual General Meeting
AMK	ammattikorkeakoulu, polytechnical institute (Finland)
APEL	Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning
APL	Accreditation of Prior Learning
APT	Area for Priority Treatment (Scotland)
ASCETT	Advisory Scottish Council on Education and Training Targets
BA	Bachelor of Arts (university-accredited first degree)
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BfI	Bargaining for Skills (United Kingdom)
BIM	Fishery agency (Ireland)
BTEC	Business and Technology Education Council (now part of Edexcel) (United Kingdom)
CBI	Confederation of British Industry
CERT	Hotel & Catering agency (Ireland)
CES	Community Education Service (United Kingdom)
Cgil	Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro
Cisl	Italian Confederation of Workers' Unions
CILO	Centri di Iniziativa Locale per l'Occupazione (Centres for Local Employment Initiatives (Italy)
CITE	Centre for Technical Educational Innovation (Italy)
COIC	Careers and Occupational Information Centre (United Kingdom)
COILLTE	Forestry agency (Ireland)
CORA	Centri Orientamento Retravailler Associati (Italy)
CoSLA	Confederation of Scottish Local Authorities
CRE	Commission for Racial Equality (United Kingdom)
CV	curriculum vitae (summary of skills, qualifications etc required by some employers)
DfEE	Department for Education and Employment (United Kingdom)
DIEFFE	Women and training (Milan)
DSS	Department of Social Services (United Kingdom)
ECCTIS	Educational Counselling and Credit Transfer Information System
ECHO	European Community Horizon
ECRE	European Council on Refugees and Exiles
ECU	European Currency Unit, now replaced by the Euro
EDP	Employee Development Programme
EDS	Employee Development Scheme
EGSA	Educational Guidance Service for Adults (United Kingdom)
EOC	Equal Opportunities Commission (United Kingdom)
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ES	Employment Service(s)
ESF	European Social Fund
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages
ESOPO	Network developing equal opportunities (Italy)
ESRI	Economic and Social Research Institute (Ireland)
EU	European Union
EUDIFF Italia	Organisation creating an information network for women's associations
EURES	European Commission programme
EUSE	European Union of Supported Employment
EWA	Europe Work Action
FE	Further Education (United Kingdom)

FINSE	Finnish Network of Supported Employment
GCC	Glasgow City Council
GCE A level	General Certificate of Education Advanced Level (United Kingdom)
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education (United Kingdom)
GDA	Glasgow Development Agency
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GHS	General Household Survey (United Kingdom)
GIOC	Christian Youth Workers (Italy)
GNVQ	General National Vocational Qualification (United Kingdom)
GP	General (medical) Practitioner
HNC	Higher National Certificate
HOPS	henkilökohtainen opetussuunnitelma (individual study and employment plan) (Finland)
IAG	Interdepartmental Advisory Group (Ireland)
ICCD	International Center for Clubhouse Development
ICS	Social Cooperative Consortium (Italy)
ICT	information and communication technologies
IiP	Investors in People (United Kingdom)
ILM	intermediate labour market
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IND	Immigration Nationality Department (United Kingdom)
Istat	National Statistics Institute (Italy)
IT	information technology
ITM	Irish Traveller Movement
JIT	Job IT System (Italy)
JSA	Job Seekers' Allowance (United Kingdom)
LDC	Local Development Company (United Kingdom)
LEAD	Linking Education and Disability (United Kingdom)
LEC	Local Enterprise Company (Scotland)
LES	Local Employment Service (Ireland)
LESPAC	Policy Advisory Committee (Ireland)
LFS	Labour Force Survey
LIAISE	Learning Initiatives for Adults in Scottish Education
LDP	Local Development Programme (Ireland)
NACCEG	National Advisory Council for Careers and Educational Guidance (United Kingdom)
NACETT	National Advisory Council for Education and Training Targets (United Kingdom)
NAEGA	National Association of Educational Guidance for Adults (United Kingdom)
NCGE	National Centre for Guidance in Education (Ireland)
NCU	National Coordination Unit for the LEONARDO da VINCI programme of the European Communities
NCVQ	National Council for Vocational Qualifications (United Kingdom)
NGfL	National Grid for Learning (United Kingdom)
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NHS	National Health Service (United Kingdom)
NIACE	National Institute for Adult and Continuing Education (United Kingdom)
NICEC	National Institute for Careers and Educational Counselling (United Kingdom)
NidiL	Nuove Identità di Lavoro (New Working Identities) (Italy)
NOW	New Opportunities for Women, European Commission programme
NRB	National Rehabilitation Board (Ireland)
NTDI	National Training & Development Centre (Ireland)
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification (United Kingdom)

OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OPCS	Office of Population Censuses and Surveys (United Kingdom)
OU	Open University (United Kingdom)
PACT	Placement, Assessment and Counselling Team (ES) (United Kingdom)
PAT	pitkäaikaistyöttömät (long-term unemployed) (Finland)
PETRA	European Commission programme which preceded LEONARDO da VINCI and focused principally on young people
PR	public relations
SII	Social Insurance Institute, Kansaneläkelaitos (Finland)
SME	small- or medium-sized enterprise
SOEID	Scottish Office Education and Industry Department
SQA	Scottish Qualifications Authority
SQMS	Scottish Quality Management Systems
STUC	Scottish Trades Union Congress
SVQ	Scottish Vocational Qualification, equivalent to NVQ
TAP	Training Access Point (United Kingdom)
TEC	Training and Enterprise Council (England and Wales)
TEG	Training and Employment Grant (United Kingdom)
Toke	Tampereen toimintakeskus, Tampere Activity Centre (Finland)
TUC	Trades Union Congress (United Kingdom)
UfI	University for Industry (United Kingdom)
UNHRC	United Nations High Commission on Refugees
USSL	Local Health Unit (Italy)
VAT	Value Added Tax (tax payable on certain goods and services throughout the EU)
Vates	Vajaakuntoisten työllistämisen edistämissäätio (Foundation Promoting Employment of Disabled People in Finland)
WEA	Workers' Educational Association (United Kingdom)

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Pamela Clayton
University of Glasgow

For the purposes of this study, we have taken a simple and narrow definition of people at risk of social exclusion: that is, those who are able and willing to enter employment or get a better job, either directly or via education or training, but who have particular difficulties in so doing. Although our focus is necessarily narrow, we agree that fairness is central to a civilised society and that education is not just about competitiveness (from speech by Andrew Smith, United Kingdom Employment Minister, in Ingham 1998).

SOCIAL EXCLUSION

A range of factors contributes to social exclusion, and people of all ages may be excluded from participating in the normal social and economic life of the country in which they live. Poverty and social exclusion are not synonyms:

> (Mulgan[1]) says poverty is only one attribute of those at the bottom of the heap: they are more property defined as excluded because they live outside the worlds of work, of education and of sociability itself. Their contacts narrow to a point where they receive little or not information through the informal networks that assist most people into work: they are stranded in a kind of desert in which they are vulnerable to vultures that prey on them, or encourage them to prey on other, their isolation only periodically visited by welfare and enforcement agencies. These come in a variety of guises, all confusing or threatening (Lloyd 1997).

Furthermore, 'social exclusion' implies that processes are at work outwith the control of the individual. In a modern economy, the single greatest symptom of social exclusion is likely to be low income, arising from unemployment or precarious or low-paid employment. Paid work can give not only an income but a degree of independence, a sense of self-worth and a socially-valued identity. Poverty, furthermore, contributes to poor health, both physical and psychological, reduced life expectancy and general poor quality of life.

The main priority issue to be addressed in this project, therefore, is to combat the exclusion of those at a disadvantage in the labour market; but clearly any dependants of excluded individuals also suffer disadvantage and, in the case of children, a potentially problematic future in the labour market. So inclusion will overall have a beneficial multiplier effect.

The excluded are heterogeneous: they include

> the immobilised - the carless, the infirm, the disabled, the chronically sick, the carers for the young and the old, and those too shy or frightened to walk the streets in the dark or the light ... the unemployed and the under-employed ... the under-achievers, the under-qualified, the unskilled, the uneducated and the unfulfilled ... those who cannot cope with the basic routines and obligations of daily life; the homeless, the badly-housed, the demoralised, the demotivated and the distrustful ... the unaspiring

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[1] Founder and director of the Demos policy centre in the United Kingdom.

> and the hedonists ... the brutal, the bent and the villainous. What, if anything, you all have in common is their confusion, their frustration, their disillusionment, their low self-esteem and their alienation (Jones 1997).

We would add those who are disadvantaged by age, sex, class, ethnicity, religious background, employment status, illiteracy, rurality and refugee status. Some individuals suffer multiple disadvantage.

Social exclusion and lifelong learning

In an era of large-scale unemployment and rapid technological and social change, lifelong learning is increasingly necessary for individuals wishing to gain, change or progress in employment. The correlation between unemployment and low levels of education and the trend towards higher skilled jobs means that facilitating individuals to increase their level of education is a priority. In some cases, the need is rather to update skills (for example, in the case of labour market returners), to acquire recognised qualifications and/or the national language (notably, in the case of refugees and other immigrants) or to regain confidence or learn new ways of performing tasks (as when an individual becomes disabled).

Whether or not this is realistic for many existing jobs, many employers are now looking for skills other than the job-specific: foundation skills such as reading, writing, listening and speaking; creative thinking, decision-making, problem-solving, learning; and display of responsibility, self-esteem, self-management and integrity; and key competencies such as planning and organising, interpersonal skills, information use, understanding of complex systems and familiarity with a range of technology (Wickens 1996). A few employers look also for employees' knowledge of their own learning style.

There is little doubt that the possession of a university degree is invaluable in both finding employment and promotional prospects, especially for those who take their degree at a relatively early age. A recent follow-up survey of Scottish graduate destinations, confirmed by employers' reports, found that more than half the 1992 graduates had doubled their salaries in the four years since first entering employment (Levey & Mackenzie 1996). Furthermore, the expansion in the number of university graduates in countries like the United Kingdom mean that more employers expect to recruit graduates. One study found that half the managers surveyed predicted that the proportion of graduates in their establishments would increase over the next five years, in most cases by graduates replacing non-graduates in jobs which are becoming more technically sophisticated (Nove et al. 1997).

Studies of access to adult learning both provide data on patterns of participation and the reasons for them. For groups at risk of social exclusion, participation is low where institutions do not provide appropriate courses; a middle-class, ethnocentric ethos is pervasive; timetabling and lack of child-care provision do not recognise the needs of women; courses are located far from home; fees are high; disabled access is poor; and there are few support structures (McGivney 1993). In Italy, literacy courses attracted very poor participation because the Ministry of Education set up 'rigid, school-like provision' and there was no 'visible relationship between the literacy provision and a social policy favourable to emancipation of the marginalised groups' (Lichtner 1991).

The difficulty of access is one reason for non-participation, and in Europe as a whole market principles of supply and demand tend to exclude 'the poor, the disadvantaged, the less-well-educated' (Wouters 1992). These are older adults, less affluent and well-educated people, women with dependent children, ethnic minorities and rural populations (McGivney 1993). Furthermore, although participation has increased in non-traditional groups, the paid educational leave policy failed to attract many of those most in need 'because they didn't know about the courses' (Westergren 1995).

Lack of information and advice has been noted in British studies too (McGivney 1993; Park 1994).

Young people have relatively high rates of participation, whether in work-related training or in other forms of adult education, a trend found elsewhere (except Finland) and since at least the 1920s, and a majority of adult students under 40 are on credit-bearing courses (McGivney 1993). The 1993 Individual Commitment to Learning (ICtL) Survey found that over the previous 3 years, and excluding full-time students, 60% of those involved in vocational learning (defined as any learning relevant to a job or to getting a job) were in their 20s (Park 1994). In the United Kingdom, although adult students now make up large and increasing proportions of students in further and higher education, they tend to be younger adults, particularly the men.

Despite regional variations in degree of participation, the British pattern (which is typical of industrialised countries) is clear: those in classes A and B (professional/technical) have the highest participation rates (42%), followed in turn by class C1 (skilled manual workers - 37%), C2 (semi-skilled - 29%) and C3 (unskilled - 17%). Those in higher income-groups can better afford to finance their own learning and in addition have greater access to retraining (McGivney 1993; Park 1994). In general

> someone with a degree is eight times more likely to receive job-related training than someone without any previous qualifications. Barriers to learning are firmly entrenched ... Many also have negative associations with education based on their previous experience. The result is a vicious spiral exacerbating inequality of opportunity: the less people's potential is fulfilled, the less able and motivated they are to develop themselves (Hillman 1997a).

Participation in education and training is to some extent a matter of personal choice, but the patterns that emerge on analysis of participants suggests that wider cultural, social and economic factors play an important part. Those most in need of education and training to enhance their life-chances, such as the poor, the ill-qualified, lone parents, those in remote economically declining areas and ethnic minorities, are the least likely to participate in it, and often for good reason. Finally, Courtney in 1981 observed that participation 'is not merely a function of socio-demographic variables ... Rather it has something more to do with perceptions of power and self-worth mediated through the instrumentality of these variables' (McGivney 1993).

LIFELONG LEARNING AND VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING

Such studies of access to adult learning point to the need for vocational guidance, either as a stand-alone service or as an integral part of courses, and to some of the particular problems that vocational guidance can help to address.

Wherever the phrases 'guidance', 'adult guidance' or 'vocational guidance' are used in this report in the context of helping combat social exclusion, it is to be understood as carrying the full meaning conveyed here. There is good evidence in the general literature that guidance is useful for those without good access to support from family or social networks or working knowledge of the education system. For example, young people of ethnic minority background make more use of formal guidance than those from the ethnic majority. Such guidance can also help people in general see possibilities, motivate them and set people on the path to employment, thus bringing measurable economic benefits as well as combating social exclusion (Killeen et al. 1992).

Vocational guidance and counselling is not limited to services specifically set up for this. It may also be found in learning provision, for example, community education, training programmes, access programmes, further and higher education and employee development programmes. Wherever it is found, a good service attempts to carry out the functions of guidance as laid out by, for example, AEGIS (1995:24-6):

- providing information
- helping people interpret information and make choices
- helping people find out what they want and need and work out various ways of meeting their wants and needs
- helping people's ability to choose opportunities appropriate to their personal, educational and vocational development
- providing learning experiences to help people gain the skills needed to make decisions and transitions, such as courses on interview techniques
- supporting people in dealing with educational institutions or employment agencies, in a way that encourages them to do it by themselves another time
- advocating (directly negotiating with institutions or agencies on behalf on a user)
- networking (establishing links, formal/informal and keeping regular contact with a range of agencies and individuals)
- gathering information on unmet or ill-met needs of users, so that provision can be adapted or developed
- ensuring a coherent, sustainable guidance programme, with staff development and public relations (PR)
- innovating systems change (supporting improvements in guidance practice)

Since the main priority issue to be addressed in this project is to combat the exclusion of adults at a disadvantage in the labour market, our target groups meet the following criteria:

- their members are aged 18 or more and have left full-time education;
- they are either unemployed, low-paid workers or wish to return to the labour market or to vocational education after a break;
- they are willing and able to partake in paid economic activity, albeit in some cases having special requirements.

Important differences between school and adult guidance were outlined by Muhammad Arif Awan, Adult Guidance Co-ordinator for Careers Bradford Ltd (interview, 17/10/97).

- In adult guidance the role of the professional must be negotiated. The guidance officer is not 'in the driving seat'. Adults may know what they want to do, may have more expectations, perhaps more desires, and are generally more likely to challenge the guidance officer. On the other hand, some adults (for example, redundant operatives) do want to be told what to do.
- Adults need a holistic approach, which takes into account many other circumstances, such as age, health, and family. Their possibilities may be more constrained and the time scale for action shorter than is possible for many young people. Yet the long-term unemployed need motivating and stimulating before anything productive can be achieved, so a long time is needed.
- Adult clients are, unlike school children, usually unknown to the guidance officer, who may not see them again. It is therefore important for the first guidance interview to be as productive as possible.

Not all groups who could be defined as socially excluded are ready for vocational guidance - the street homeless, for example, have more pressing priorities - and there are people without employment who would not, for a variety of reasons, consider themselves socially excluded, while others in employment might well feel disadvantaged. The main target groups for access to free vocational guidance, in general terms, are those who:

- are unemployed, actively seeking work but have no/low qualifications
- are discouraged workers, who have given up hope of finding employment and have ceased to seek it
- claim they do not want to be employed but are in fact discouraged workers
- currently obtain a small income in the informal economy (the 'black' and 'grey' economies) and need persuading that the formal economy is, in the long-term, safer and more beneficial to them
- are in employment which they perceive as unsatisfactory and have no/low qualifications
- are not currently available for employment but intend to become so
- are in transition between any of these groups

Given evidence that vocational guidance can help adults to gain the confidence and self-esteem that are frequently necessary before an individual embarks on learning or the search for employment, we chose to focus on ways in which guidance services can attract those most at need, whether this is for information, advice, individual vocational guidance and counselling, group sessions in confidence-raising and assertiveness, assistance in seeking a job, work placements or any of the many other services offered. Access to vocational guidance is often even more difficult than access to lifelong learning

BARRIERS TO ACCESS

There are general barriers to access, whether to vocational guidance, lifelong learning or employment; important ones are lack of knowledge, of confidence, of self-esteem and of hope: 'The adults who are often the most difficult to meet and, therefore, support in the community are frequently those who cannot see a way forward' (Blackwell 1998:4). This is not merely a matter of personal disposition: these barriers arise out of the very situation of some groups, notably those most at risk of social exclusion.

The particular barriers for each group are summarised here. It should be borne in mind, however, that some individuals fall into more than one of these groups; at the same time, most services have more than one target group.

Lack of national/regional provision

This means that many people in need of guidance cannot access it simply because they do not live in an area with a guidance service or may not be eligible to use a nearby service because of funding constraints.

Life in rural areas

Rural areas are here defined as areas with low population density and poor access to urban areas, either because of distance or lack of affordable transport. Although rural areas, especially those within commuting distance of cities, are often affluent ones, national studies show that 25% of rural families live on or below the poverty line. Living in generally affluent areas means there is a lack of support services, public transport and childcare - and if guidance provision in urban areas is patchy, it is almost non-existent in rural ones, though very necessary (Gonzalez 1995; McGrath 1998; Payne 1998). All of the member states participating in this study (and most which are not), however industrialised and urbanised, have rural populations which, though increasingly a minority of the total population, have particular difficulties of access and need special provision. There is frequently a scarcity of jobs in rural areas, and other types of economic participation require identification (Murphy 1996).

Physical, psychological or learning disabilities

The example of Professor Stephen Hawking tells us that extreme physical disability is not in itself a bar to profitable and respected employment. There have also been celebrated persons suffering from psychological illness; and people with learning difficulties have proved themselves capable of independent living and holding down a job. So disability, of whatever form, arises principally from social factors. The two major disadvantages for unemployed people with disabilities who are capable of paid work are lack of training adapted to an individual's special needs and public perception, notably that of employers, however personally sympathetic they may be. For example, some cite health and safety requirements as a reason for not hiring disabled people. The challenges of finding work are compounded for those living in poor areas where there is a high unemployment rate.

In the United Kingdom, 'for the person their continuity of experience is not matched by continuity of service provision' (Peter Davies, REHAB Scotland, interview 1998). Those with disabilities should be registered and therefore receive guidance and support, but in practice this does not always happen. For example, General Practitioners are not trained to deal with disabled patients' needs outwith the medical. So problems of access to vocational guidance and counselling remain.

Patterns of disability have changed. Happily, there are fewer victims of warfare, but many fall victim to violence, accident, poor working conditions, illness or stress, as well as those suffering inherited, congenital or other illnesses or disabilities. Many of these neither desire nor are capable of paid work; some, however, are both able and willing to enter or re-enter the labour force, given the chance. For these, guidance may be indispensable.

Insecure employment status or low pay and level of skill

The great majority of poor people are women, who are excluded from security (including lack of an adequate pension), a cultural life and access to education, training and employment. In the United Kingdom more women seek training than are selected for government programmes for the unemployed (McGivney 1993). Where women do have a job, it is all too often ill-paid, insecure and with no access to training or chance of progression. Although the majority of such workers are women, there are also men in this position. Mothers of children of all ages have particular difficulties:

> The barriers that prevent women becoming economically active ... include lack of self-confidence, lack of recognition of existing skills and the lack of accessible and affordable childcare. 'Traditional women's jobs', with low wages and poor quality work, can act as disincentives to women seeking to return to work or to find employment for the first time (Barrhead Women's Centre 1997).

Lone mothers (and lone fathers) are in a particularly difficult position where childcare is expensive, as do those responsible for eldercare (Department of Employment 1992; DfEE 1996a; Hyatt & Parry-Crooke 1990; National Council for One Parent Families 1994, 1995; Thomas 1992). Even to access vocational guidance is difficult for carers.

Ethnic minority women have much higher unemployment rates than White women, with additional disabilities if they are immigrants or refugees; and throughout Europe they face particular problems in accessing learning, with language the biggest, but not the only, barrier (Clayton 1995; Oglesby 1991). Even middle-class women returners, suffering loss of confidence and skills in need of up-dating, may find themselves in a difficult position when their husbands' income disqualifies them from benefiting from free education and training. Finally, where training is available, women are often inhibited from participation by their previous education, financial situation (especially for the expensive training for management), child-care problems, inflexible programming and inadequate vocational guidance.

An early decision by the project team not to prioritise services for women, in view of the earlier study (*Women Returners' Project*, see Chisholm 1997; Clayton 1996), was autonomously rejected by each team on discovering the degree of risk of social exclusion suffered by women in particular.

Many men, too, especially unskilled workers, face barriers to lifelong learning, such as bad experiences at school, lack of confidence in their ability to learn, commitment of energy to family difficulties arising from poverty, lack of opportunity for employer-financed training and lack of money to finance their own (Beer 1997).

Homelessness

People with lives that are seen as problematic run up against employer perceptions that they will make unsuitable employees: if they cannot manage their own lives, how can they manage employment? The danger of being perceived in this way is probably at its most extreme in the case of homeless people.

The life expectancy of the homeless in the United Kingdom is 42-45 years, well over 30 years below the average. They find it hard to register with a doctor and are excluded from voting. They often suffer problems such as alcoholism, drug abuse, mental health problems, family/marital breakdown, English as a second language, lack of qualifications, disability, age (including those who are too young to receive state benefits), criminal record, past physical or sexual abuse, and literacy/numeracy problems. Some have never had a job or even a job interview. There is a general mistrust of the authorities, including social workers. Many clients have no idea where to start. Vocational guidance and counselling, once trust and confidence are won, provides a chance for the client to sit down with a non-judgmental person and have the opportunity (perhaps for the first time) to review their situation and to look at the options available.

Prison record

Ex-offenders have particular difficulties in accessing employment. Not only do they carry the stigma of a prison record and the resulting suspicion from potential employers, but they often lack basic skills such as literacy and numeracy, may have a history of drug dependency and perhaps have never had a job in the formal economy. In the United Kingdom a disproportionate number of prisoners are black, adding to their disadvantaged status. Furthermore ex-offenders are likely to be suspicious of officialdom, mistrustful and lacking in belief that they can ever succeed in the formal labour market. It is not uncommon for released prisoners to become homeless.

Ethnic minority status, exile and travelling lifestyle

We have been careful to distinguish between different groups of people who may be regarded as 'outsiders', as they have different profiles and different problems (as indeed do subsets of each group). Nevertheless, all these groups have much in common too, and their members are liable to face difficulties wherever they live in the EU. What these groups have in common is that they suffer from prejudice and discrimination, especially where they are visibly different from the majority population. Hence each project member has chosen to include them among their target groups. We should note that the convention in Finland and Italy is to refer to ethnic minorities as immigrants, whereas in the United Kingdom the distinction is here made between those who are new arrivals and those who are settled or were born in the country, a distinction not made, however, by the majority population and by some employers.

Ethnic minority status

Even controlling for country of birth, language spoken and qualifications, members of ethnic minorities have higher unemployment rates than Whites and face racial discrimination. Prejudice and stereotyping by employers include negative notions about attitudes towards work. Where English is clearly not the first language, as is the case with many immigrants, this poses an additional hurdle. Rates of unemployment and types and levels of employment vary between different ethnic groups, and this very diversity needs to be recognised by guidance services (Rigaut & Papadopolou 1995). It is often assumed that certain groups, such as those with Indian or Pakistani backgrounds, have a natural inclination for self-employment; in fact, this is often forced upon them by the difficulty of accessing employment and the lack of information on training opportunities. They tend to rely on family and friends rather than on mainstream agencies, although the provision of dedicated guidance services has attracted a good number of young ethnic minority people.

Flight and exile

Not only are refugees disadvantaged by their initial treatment as asylum-seekers (Scottish Ethnic Minorities Research Unit 1996), they enter into a situation where ethnic minorities are already disadvantaged by prejudice; so many refugees are doubly disadvantaged and are also in competition with native ethnic minorities. Although white refugees have an advantage over native ethnic minorities, on the whole refugees suffer from the experience of prejudice, both deliberate and ignorant, from national perceptions fuelled by the popular press.

Refugees have enormous resettlement difficulties. They have come to a country with an alien culture and language; they have had no time to prepare for such a change in their lives and are often traumatised by their experiences - many have been tortured or imprisoned; they are often separated from their families; they may arrive only with what they can carry, and need immediate practical assistance with housing, food and income, as well as longer-term support in relation to language, health, education, training and employment. The very complexity of our system makes labour market access difficult even when they have been accepted as refugees.

One survey concluded that 'many refugees and asylum seekers were experiencing difficulties in accessing services provided by various organisations'. The biggest barriers to accessing services were seen as language, translation and interpretation; but a major problem was access to information on what services were available (Redbridge Refugee Forum 1997). In particular, since few source countries have vocational guidance and counselling systems, refugees do not usually know that such help exists.

With the exception of Vietnamese refugees, a large proportion of people who seek asylum in the United Kingdom are highly qualified professionals from urban areas and a quarter are university graduates, yet two-thirds of them cannot find employment even when allowed to do so. Initially lack of competent English is the major barrier to employment, but other factors are the break in their careers - often a very traumatic break with long-term psychological effects; the lack of work experience in Britain; and discrimination against them by employers. Even where United Kingdom educational qualifications were obtained, over a half remained unemployed. Not only is there a high rate of unemployment and the resultant low income, but also many refugees and asylum-seekers suffer poor accommodation, poor health, including high rates of anxiety and depression, and racial harassment and abuse. Those who did have jobs were generally under-employed for their qualifications and experience and had little chance of progression; many did voluntary work (Carey-Wood et al. 1995; Scottish Ethnic Minorities Research Unit 1994; Scottish National Conference on Refugees 1992).

Another survey of refugees and asylum-seekers found widespread dissatisfaction with the Employment Service: either staff believed they were not eligible to use Job Centre facilities or they gave a poor service (Pile 1997:15). Ignorance of the special position of refugees is probably a factor: when one Job Centre was asked if a group of refugees on an ESOL course could pay a visit 'the initial response was one of polite incomprehension: the person I spoke to considered their procedures so straightforward and self-explanatory that she could not see the purpose of a visit ... (but) there were no bilingual staff and no literature available in any language other than English' (Bellis & Awar 1995:31).

Travelling people

These include the Romany and the Irish Travellers. Their former means of obtaining an income has largely disappeared and the great majority of travelling people are unemployed. Life expectancy is low, about thirty years below the national average, there is widespread illiteracy and travelling people suffer a great deal of stigma, prejudice and discrimination. Although the case studies here come only from Ireland, there are travelling people throughout the European Union and also in the pre-accession states.

Life in areas of deprivation, long-term unemployment and advancing age

This includes areas which have suffered from industrial restructuring or with a long history of high unemployment, very often with significant numbers of older and long-term unemployed people. Italy and the United Kingdom have undergone significant de-industrialisation; Ireland has long had high unemployment; and Finland, only quite recently urbanised and industrialised, has since seen its unemployment rate rise to unprecedented heights. It is the older industrialised countries, Italy and the United Kingdom, which have chosen to target this particular problem and attempts to ameliorate it.

Areas of deprivation may develop a culture of poverty but this does not necessarily bring social solidarity. Often there is a lack of role models, that is, employed persons, in the family or even in the area. Growing poverty and high unemployment often lead to involvement in the non-legal economy, drug and alcohol abuse, crime within the area, fear and despair - and an unfortunate reputation which affects all who live there. Of particular importance is that employers are often reluctant to hire people from such areas. In class societies, one of the most significant factor in social exclusion is social class (Steele 1998) and in the United Kingdom the phenomenon known as 'postcode discrimination' is well-known - applications from certain districts are simply ignored (Darmon & Frade 1998). In some cities this is allied with religious, sectarian or ethnic discrimination. In other cases there is little local employment and those who cannot access an adequate wage cannot afford to travel to a workplace.

The unemployed are less likely than the employed to be recent learners or to have engaged in vocational training within the previous three years, and most training for the unemployed is undertaken by young people, mainly boys (McGivney 1993; Park 1994). What provision exists often has no regard for 'the specific circumstances, experience, learning barriers and needs of individuals' and there is insufficient help for the most disadvantaged. Furthermore, having been on a programme for the long-term unemployed carries a stigma in the eyes of prospective employers and such schemes can fail to recruit, especially when unemployed people are also 'educationally damaged' (ibid. 1993).

The Family and Working Lives Survey focused on the employment and family histories of a sample of around 11,000 people. The analysis suggested that the age of fifty often marked a turning point. In particular, manual workers, always at most risk of unemployment, suffered increased unemployment from this age on and fewer than half returned to paid work. Older unemployed workers were found to use fewer methods of jobsearch than younger ones (McKay & Middleton 1998). There is also discrimination by employers against older workers and many become discouraged: perhaps for every ten people aged fifty or more registered unemployed there are 25 who have withdrawn from the labour market for this reason (Ford 1996). The folly of this is shown by an example from the United Kingdom, that of a national chain of do-it-yourself and hardware stores, B & Q, which, following a policy of hiring older workers, has found an increase in customer satisfaction.

ACCESS TO VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE: WHAT CAN BE DONE

There are, nevertheless, many examples of good practice and creative ideas in enhancing access to guidance. The following four chapters, 2-5, are each devoted to one country, for ease of reading and to preserve intact in continuous texts national differences in style. The content of these chapters, however, was decided in team discussions and each follows a similar format. They begin with a review of social exclusion, lifelong learning, vocational guidance and policy development in these areas. There has been no attempt to impose uniformity of presentation, but all cover similar fields of investigation:

- a statistical survey of the extent and main types of social exclusion since the 1980s, thus providing a series of snapshots and a historical perspective which allows us to make informed guesses about trends at least in the short-term future. The statistics are gendered where available.
- the current availability of lifelong learning opportunities;
- official policy on adult vocational guidance; and the training and destination of adult guidance officers
- a summary, analysis and critical evaluation of the availability of lifelong learning and lifelong guidance in the participating member states.

It should be noted a) that although these are groups at risk of social exclusion, not all individuals within them experience social exclusion and b) there is considerable overlap between categories as some individuals suffer multiple disadvantage. In any case, to produce precise numbers of individuals at risk of or suffering social exclusion is beyond the scope of this survey.

Following this is a collection of case studies, each chosen for their focus on at least one aspect of access. These studies include a description of the origins of the service; their users and main activities; issues linked to access; network connections within the local context with both institutions and with social and economic actors active in the area; and finally, where available, results and evaluations of the activities provided by these organisations.

Each chapter ends with recommendations for policy-makers and guidance services in that country.

The choice of services by each Partner was made on both pragmatic and evaluative grounds. Services had to be accessible to the researcher, be willing to co-operate in the study and to include target groups felt by the Partner to be particularly important. The approach of the service had to be person-centred and holistic and it had to have attempted to overcome at least some of the barriers to access. Each case study has five sections: history, context and general structure, including staffing and funding; functions, target groups and content; access; networking; and outcomes and assessment. Where possible, interviews were conducted with a small number of service users. These were not intended to be representative or to form part of the evaluation, but to illustrate some of the experiences and felt needs of individual users.

Service providers were generally well able to assess their strengths and weaknesses themselves, but the actual outcomes of intervention were not always known to them. Where economic outcomes are known, it is hard to disentangle the effect of guidance from other effects (Plant 1995); and whereas 'hard' outcomes such as progression to employment, education or training are quantifiable, 'soft' outcomes such as increased motivation or enhanced job-seeking skills are harder to establish. Yet these are important and may lead on to 'hard' outcomes in the future. Where a service has been independently evaluated, a summary of the evaluation is included in the case study.

Chapter 6 differs from chapter 2-5, although it too is a national report. Our Czech partners joined the project late, as 'silent' partners, receiving funding through the Czech national authorities, and the Czech report, which is based on the research of the Czech team and on research conducted by the Project Co-ordinator on a visit to the Czech Republic (funded by the Know How Fund through the British Embassy in Prague) is shorter than the others. It is, however, interesting as an example of a country which previously had no official unemployment and hence no employment services, let alone guidance services, before 1989.

Chapter 7 summarises the national reports and draws conclusions. Following are a combined bibliography and appendices containing a list of case studies by location, case studies by target group, the interview schedules used for the survey and some useful websites.

CHAPTER TWO

ACCESS TO VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE IN ITALY

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ACTIVE LABOUR MARKET POLICIES IN FAVOUR OF ADULT GROUPS AT RISK OF SOCIAL EXCLUSION

The aim of this two year survey has been two-fold. First and foremost we wanted to investigate and define the main factors that make access to vocational guidance services difficult, if not impossible, for adult groups risking exclusion from the labour market. In the second place, another of the survey's objectives was to provide a series of recommendations and indications for both guidance service practitioners and policy makers so that access for the above-mentioned adults groups might be improved.

According to these objectives, the first section of chapter two defines the adult groups risking exclusion from the labour market or those which might run this risk in the future. This definition stems from literature on the subject and an in-depth analysis of the most significant economic and social indicators. Five adult groups were outlined: adult men between the ages of 40 and 50 made redundant and women over thirty trying, after a ten year absence for family reasons, to return to the labour market; workers with atypical contracts; the long-term unemployed; the immigrant population; the physically and mentally disabled.

In the next section, we wished to provide a synthetic framework of the most significant transformations to have taken place over the last few years in the labour market, both from the point of view of institutional structure and of regulation. Furthermore this framework constitutes the main stages of a modernisation process that has involved labour policies. As far as the latter are concerned, three main models (with particular emphasis on vocational guidance) of local interventions that have been implemented in Italy are described highlighting the strong and weak points. These are: the employment agency, the territorial pact and the job centre. Having covered the economic and social context and that of labour market interventions, the second part of this chapter contains 12 significant initiatives pertaining to organisation and vocational guidance targeted towards the disadvantaged adult groups described in the previous part.

The aim of the final section is to provide some recommendations both to practitioners and policy makers to improve access to and efficiency in the organisations providing guidance services. These observations and conclusions stem both from an accurate analysis of the case studies and a series of interviews conducted, on the one hand, by interviewing experts in the field of structural changes in the labour market and social exclusion, vocational guidance experts and representatives of the social partners and, on the other, by users themselves.

Groups at risk of social exclusion

The following defines the groups of adults at greater risk of exclusion from the labour market, an exclusion which, if prolonged, risks turning into full-blown social exclusion. Those groups of people will be identified for whom active employment policies, such as counselling, guidance, and continuous training, may represent effective measures to avoid or combat this exclusion, which will be discussed in the next paragraph. It is important to underline that the intent here is not to support the thesis according to which these are the only measures that can prevent this risk. Quite the contrary. They become all the more effective when integrated with the application of other active policies and with income support.

We shall attempt in the following paragraphs to illustrate, on the basis of a careful analysis of the major economic and social indicators and of the characteristics of the Italian labour market, the arguments for the selection of the following categories of people:

i) Adult male workers aged 40 to 50 years who have recently lost their jobs, and women over thirty re-entering the market after a ten year interruption;

ii) Temporary employees and the self-employed with "atypical" contracts;

iii) Long-term unemployed;

iv) Immigrant workers;

v) The disabled: physical, psychological and mental.

The first thing we note is that economic and social exclusion is not the lot solely of the unemployed or disabled, categories traditionally acknowledged to be socially disadvantaged groups, and which in a labour market without any corrective action are, or tend to find themselves, at the tail end of the line of aspirants for a position. But it is closely connected with the structural and cultural changes that are radically altering the economic system and social fabric of our society. These are, in particular, demographic changes (the ageing of the population and the positive migratory balance), the sectoral, technological, and structural-organisational transformations in production, and, finally, the redefinition of social welfare and of its relative expenditure[2].

A basic characteristic of the Italian labour market is its North-South territorial dualism, by which is meant a territorial divergence in economic and technological development between the Centre-North of the country and the Mezzogiorno, or South[3], an imbalance in existence before the unification of the country in 1861 and never overcome. The Centre-North is characterised by an efficient industrial sector and production capable of generating levels of demand that absorbs almost the entire local labour force, together with a good part of the immigrant labour force; the Mezzogiorno is burdened by industrial facilities providing low levels of productivity, suffocated by an anomalous, hypertrophied service sector, and fosters low levels of demand for labour. The South has remained essentially an economy dependent on external help, with high rates of unemployment, low levels of GDP per capita, and low accumulation rates compared with the North. Add to this the existence of entire regions living in conditions of social degradation, devastated by the Mafia and organised crime.

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[2] The present system appears weighted on the side of expenditure for the elderly, while the allocation for other sectors of society (the unemployed, young, single women, disabled) is on the whole insufficient. Starting with 1992 there has been a large-scale reform of the pension system and a reduction in the percentage of the GDP spent for social protection, health care in particular.

[3] The regions that are part of the two major territorial areas are:
The **North-Centre**:
North-west Italy: Piedmont, Lombardy, Liguria, Valle d'Aosta
North-east Italy: Trentino-AltoAdige, Veneto, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Emilia Romagna
Central Italy: Tuscany, Umbria, Marche, Lazio
The **South** (Mezzogiorno)
Southern Italy: Abruzzi, Molise, Campania, Basilicata, Calabria
The islands: Sicily, Sardinia

As can be seen from the analysis of **total occupation in absolute terms** (Table 1), employment increased in Italy throughout the 1975-1985 decade (by over one million units), almost entirely to the advantage of women (Table 6), peaking in 1991, and then began to decline over the years of deep recession from 1991 to 1995. In this period almost one million jobs were lost, less than a third of which were held by women. Slight improvements have been registered starting from 1995, again to the advantage of women (Tables 5 and 6). The data show clearly how from 1973 up to the present there has been a massive entry of women into the labour market. The factors that have allowed this process of feminisation can be summed up in: growth of the service sector connected with the development of the tertiary; the decline in birth rates; a marked improvement in the levels of education[4]; and changes in the model of participation in the labour market, from the traditional role of housewife and mother to a multiple role model.

The **employment rate** (51.4%) in 1996 remains one of the lowest in Europe, after that of Spain (47.2%), and almost ten percentage points below the European average of 60.3%. This is true of the rates for both men and women. The overall employment rate shows a downward trend over the twenty years from 1975 to 1995, on the one hand because the population increased in absolute terms (by over two million), with a consequent increase in the labour force, and the other, because of the decrease, starting in the nineties, in available jobs in absolute terms. Here too we must distinguish between the sexes. In fact, while male employment rates confirm the overall downturn, the rates for females continue to rise, except for a slight fall between 1992 and 1994. The employment rate settles at low levels because of: i) the territorial dualism discussed above; ii) the low proportion of part-time jobs: 6% for all of Italy (Table 8); iii) the high levels of irregular employment: The National Statistics Institute (Istat) (Istat 1997) estimated some 975,000 irregular full-time jobs in 1996, almost 22.3% of all labour employed in the production of goods and services, while moonlighting accounted for 7.2 million jobs in 1996.

A peculiar characteristic of the Italian labour market is the high incidence of the "self-employed", who, according to Istat totalled almost 5.786.000 million units in 1996, almost 28.8% of all the employed (Table 2). This is virtually a constant level from 1980 on and among the highest in Europe, after Greece (EU average 17.2%). Today, however, the composition has changed: it now includes (together with the traditional categories, such as the large business owners, professional people, craftsmen, storekeepers and farmers) all those employed with "atypical" contracts (workers employed on a casual, part-time, temporary or fixed-term basis, persons supplying maintenance and co-ordinating services, co-operative associated workers and self-employed consultants who are subject to advance withholding tax or individual VAT - a kind of sales tax - registration number). "Atypical" implies a different concept of work compared with that of the "typical" worker in the Ford-Taylor type of industrial system, that is the dependant working for an unspecified period with pre-set and rigid working hours in a specific physical place (factory) and space. Today's self-employed have a different concept of that space (which is not defined by the factory, but where home and the work place overlap) and time (working hours are no longer rigidly defined). Earnings are invoiced and not measured in time (Bologna & Fumagalli

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[4] The rates of feminization in the various levels of education lie in the neighborhood of 47% for nursery school and for the years of compulsory education, while it is close to 50% for the upper middle school. At university levels the rate varies depending on the majors or diplomas pursued. Women still seem to prefer the humanities, although majors in the sciences, medicine, law, and political science are chosen by half of those registered. The degree least favoured by women is that in engineering.

1997). This component will continue to grow in the future. Two observations are important to the ends of our research. The first is that the self-employed, compared with dependent workers, have fewer restrictions, but also have very little protection. In particular this new flexible, self-employed and temporary labour force is not subject to any regulation, and enjoys no political and social representation. They have not been represented politically by the Left and the unions until very recently (in May 1998 a new federation – NidiL-Cigl - came into being as part of Cgil – Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro representing the self-employed on "atypical contracts". See case study no. 12) , as these workers are not dependants; nor has it been represented by the traditional parties of the middle and business classes, parties of the Centre, both Catholic and not (Bologna & Fumagalli, 1997).

The self-employed require on-going training and information that allow them to enhance their professionalism in order to remain competitive on the market. The importance for this category of workers of active policies is obvious.

The second observation is that the self-employed worker described by Bologna is not an "Italian" anomaly, emerging at the margins of a solidly founded capitalism, but rather a harbinger of the "post-Fordist" world. This paradigmatic change was first seen in the eighties, era of the great industrial restructuring, of which there were two types. On the one hand companies freed themselves of all tasks not strictly connected with their core business, favouring the creation of small local firms that tender for the "expelled" services. On the other, we have the vertical separation of production processes, creating smaller medium-sized businesses.

The overall **activity rate** has remained more or less constant (at around 58%) during the twenty years from 1975 to 1995 (Table 4), and is the lowest in Europe, below that of Greece or Spain, where the agriculture sector still absorbs a broad slice of the labour force. Few people offer their services in the labour market. But here too we must distinguish between the sexes. The rates for men have fallen ten points, while those for women have increased by as much over the twenty year period. Although the women in the labour force and the employment of women register a constant increment, the latter has increased by only 6%. This means that female unemployment has increased. The low levels of the labour force can be attributed to the low levels of the women's labour force (42.7% in 1996), the lowest in Europe (the European average was 57.4% in 1996).

The **unemployment rate** has increased conspicuously over the whole twenty year period (Table 4), starting from the early eighties, and with the national average at 12.1% in 1996, registering 6.6% for the Centre-North and 20.1% in the Mezzogiorno (Table 9). The percentage also diverges widely between the sexes: 9.4% for men and 16.6% for women nation-wide (Istat data, year 1996). A more attentive reading reveals an important correlation: the phenomenon is positively related to age and negatively to the level of education. In other words, the unemployment rate rises as the age increases and as the level of education decreases (Table 7).

Adult unemployment is concentrated in the Centre-North (the victims of industrial restructuring - a line at the market exit), while unemployment in the South affects for the most part the young (the line is at the entrance). The factors explaining adult unemployment are related to the great structural changes in which the industrial system of the Centre-North in particular has been engaged, and among which, summarising, we can cite: i) the sectoral transformation from industry to services; ii) changes in the size and organisation of the companies, downsizing large to small and shifting from a vertical organisation to a more flexible horizontal one; and iii) the geographical relocation of companies, from the famous Milan-Turin-Genoa triangle to north-eastern areas and the Adriatic coast.

Long-term unemployment became a significant phenomenon toward the end of the seventies, due to the long economic crisis, assuming unprecedented dimensions from the eighties on. In the stage of economic recovery, however, the effects of the crisis on the length of unemployment have not been followed by a reduction, but instead by an increase in the long-term unemployed on the whole and on the total of unemployed. The rate of long-term unemployment has continued to grow, far exceeding the European average: 65.6% compared with 46.3% in 1996 (Eurostat). While the difference in rates between the sexes is only slight, the divergence among the rates for the different parts of the country has increased significantly: 50% in the North, 66% in the Centre, and 75% in the South. The duration has also increased. The longer unemployment lasts, the greater the probability of not finding work becomes. The reasons for this phenomenon are many, but they can be summarised as follows:

- *loss of motivation and incentives:* this process involves the psychological aspects linked with the search for an occupation; in fact, a direct connection can be drawn between the length of the period of unemployment and the lack of confidence in the possibility of finding a job, the loss of faith in oneself, and problems of mental well-being and physical health[5]; to the more typically psychological aspects must be added the material cost of the search for a position, and the fact that the longer one is unemployed, the fewer the resources available for that search;
- *employers' attitudes of mistrust and diffidence* regarding those who have been without work for a long time: employers tend to hold that the refusal to hire someone who has long been unemployed is motivated by his personal characteristics;
- *real atrophy and ageing of the worker's professional capabilities*, so that companies often perceive his retraining as too expensive;
- *problems of information*, linked with segregating mechanisms in the socialisation between the employed and the unemployed: not only are the employed more informed about the labour market, but the matter is made worse by the fact that working itself is a primary form of socialisation, providing mechanisms of communication that differ from those of the unemployed and to which the latter rarely have access; on one hand information about work alternatives are not easily circulated by the employed among the unemployed, and on the other it is easier for information to be transmitted among the employed. The "seriously" unemployed generally live in a situation of atomisation, in which communication is scarce (Maiello & Maugeri 1994).

Finally, for some years now in northern Italy, and in Lombardy and the north-eastern regions in particular, we are looking at a process of inclusion of **immigrants** in the employment system. As the Second Report on Migration of the Cariplo Foundation ISMU (1996) shows, a substantial number of foreign immigrants now enter the regular labour market, although a far from small number of immigrants are employed in irregular and temporary jobs in various areas of what is called the "informal economy". The phenomenon of immigration and introduction into the employment system presents widely varied dimensions and facets depending upon the production sectors and territorial areas involved (See table 10, 11, 12, 13), a phenomenon that exceeds current images of a desperate immigration, impelled by poverty, very often illegal, destined to live by expedients, when not by illicit activities.

It is difficult to quantify the migratory phenomenon. This is partly because all foreigners who are self-employed - and in Italy this is a reality of proportions that are no longer negligible (Baptiste & Zucchetti 1994) - are by definition excluded from statistical surveys. There are three models of immigrants' participation in the Italian labour market. First, in industry in particular in the areas of small and medium-sized businesses, which are, in most cases, those most strongly affected by the drop in the birth rate, immigration appears to be destined to fulfil, especially in the future, a function of demographic exchange, replacing generations in blue-collar placements and contributing to the coffers of welfare organisms. Second, the "metropolitan model" present especially in the cities of Rome and Milan where this is concentrated in the tertiary sector and, above all, in domestic jobs (with high rates of feminisation) and where most ethnic entrepreneurship development opportunities are created. Finally, in agriculture where seasonal jobs, often irregular, prevail (Zanfrini 1997).

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[5] The empirical evidence for this presents results that merit reflection. For an comprehensive analysis of the psychological effects of unemployment, see Feather (1990). A very broad study which also includes the effects of unemployment on physical health can be found in Whelan, Hannan and Creighton (1991) For Italy, see Crepet (1990), which also contains numerous bibliographic references.

On the one hand immigrants have to face enormous barriers on entry or rather in order to access a job position. Some of the most important are:

- Obtaining residence permits;
- Cultural and language barriers often in conflict with their original ones;
- Strong prejudice on the part of employers;
- Logistic problems;
- Difficulty with regard to recognition of educational qualifications;
- Competition with local workers.

On the other, most immigrant workers, with the exception of a small minority of autonomous immigrant workers who have been successful in the restaurant sector, can be considered at risk of exclusion from the labour market for the following reasons:

- Jobs obtained are at the lowest hierarchical levels, with very few career possibilities. This triggers off a whole series of problems of a psychological nature linked to discontentment and frustration due to the non-fulfilment of career expectations. This is particularly true of those workers who have medium-high educational qualifications.
- Loss of professional capabilities. This applies, above all, to those workers who fall within the metropolitan model. Workers who come from their country of origin with a store of professional knowledge and high qualifications end up accepting low profile jobs.
- Precariousness: working conditions that are not properly safeguarded.

Finally, with regard to the situation concerning the historically weak groups of the labour market please refer to the summary shown in the table below. According to the estimates of a McKinsey (1994) survey, in 1993 the disadvantaged population in Italy accounted for 6.8 per cent (3.3 per cent non-self-sufficient people + 3.5 per cent self-sufficient) out of a total population of 57,523,000, also bearing in mind elderly people in need of assistance.

Type of disadvantage	Trend	Features
People with mental illnesses	Increasing	Both because of longer life expectancy and the associated higher incidence of senile illnesses and because of the increased social isolation of individuals
People with physical and mental disabilities	Increasing	Disability as a result of accidents and the longer life expectancy of people with disabilities. Decline in congenital diseases
People with terminal illnesses	Increasing	Strong increase in the incidence of AIDS.
Drug-users	Stable	Stable in terms of numbers, but more frequent use of a combination of different substances
Other marginalised adults	Increasing	Strong increase in the number of people unemployed for long periods, immigrants and convicts on parole
Maladjusted minors	Decreasing	Lower birth-rate and less poverty --> fewer abandoned minors --> less permanent assistance, but continuing need for temporary assistance (problems with the law, neediness of family)

Source: McKinsey & Company, 1993.

In conclusion it can therefore be underlined that in Italy the greatest risk factors of exclusion from the labour market and from society are strictly linked to the following variables: 1) Northern-Southern territorial dualism; 2) sectoral restructuring; 3) redefinition of social status and reduction of social expenditure; 4) educational level.

TABLES

Table 1. Employees by sector of economic activity and professional position – Year 1996 (absolute data in thousands)

Region	Total	Agriculture	Industry	Other Activity	Self-employed	Employees
	Men					
Italy	12,901	915	4,912	7,073	4,105	8,795
North-Centre	8,894	467	3,757	4,669	2,841	6,052
South	4,007	4488	1,155	2,404	1,264	2,743
	Women					
Italy	7,187	487	1,563	5,137	1,681	5,506
North-Centre	5,535	238	1,389	3,908	1,262	4,274
South	1,652	249	174	1,229	419	1,232

Source: Istat – Conoscere l'Italia- Introducing Italy 1997, Istituto Nazionale di Statistica, Roma, November 1997, page 68.

Table 2. Employees by sector of economic activity and professional position – Year 1996 (absolute data in thousand)

		Sector of economic activity			**Professional Position**	
Region	**Total**	**Agriculture**	**Industry**	**Other activity**	**Self employed**	**Employees**
Italy	20,088	1,402	6,475	12,210	5,786	14,301
Centre-North	14,429	705	5,146	8,577	4,103	10,326
South	5,659	697	1,329	3,633	1,683	3,975

Source: Istat – Conoscere l'Italia- Introducing Italy 1997, Istituto Nazionale di Statistica, Roma, November 1997, page 69.

Table 3. Employed by different professional position - 1995

Position in profession	**Absolute data in thousands**	**%**
Total no. of independents	**5,770**	**28.8**
Entrepreneur	367	1.8
Professionals	711	3.6
Self-employed or autonomous workers	3,616	18.1
Members of production co-operatives	228	1.1
Co-helper	850	4.2
Total employees	**14,239**	**71.2**
Total	**20,009**	**100.0**

Source: In S. Bologna, A. Fumagalli, *Il lavoro autonomo di seconda generazione (Second Generation of Self-Employment)*, Feltrinelli, Milan, 1997, page 189.

Table 4. Total (Men + Women) - Key employment indicators

Year	**1975**	**1985**	**1990**	**1991**	**1993**	**1994**	**1995**	**1996**
Total employment	19303	20221	20769	21050	20363	20002	19942	20037
Employment rate population (% population 15-64)	55.1	53.1	53.7	53.9	52.7	51.6	51.2	51.4
Activity rate (% population 15-64)	57.9	58.2	59.2	59.1	58.8	58.3	58.1	58.4
Unemployment rate (% labour force)	4.8	8.4	9.1	8.8	10.3	11.4	11.9	12.0
Youth unemployed (% labour force 15-24)	N/A	29.4	30.0	26.1	30.4	32.3	33.3	33.5
Long-term unemployment (% unemployed)	N/A	65.8	70.8	68.9	57.7	61.5	63.6	65.6
Self-employed (% total employment)	29.5	24.1	24.3	24.3	24.0	24.1	24.5	24.8
Employed part-time (% total employment)	N/A	5.3	4.9	5.5	5.4	6.2	6.4	6.6
Employed on fixed term contracts (%)	N/A	4.8	5.2	5.4	6.0	7.3	7.2	7.5

Source: Eurostat - Employment in Europe - 1997, European Commission, September 1997, page. 125.

Table. 5 Men - Key employment indicators

Men	**1975**	**1985**	**1990**	**1991**	**1993**	**1994**	**1995**	**1996**
Total employment	13792	13709	13665	13734	13266	12946	12870	12844
Employment rate population (% population 15-64)	81.1	73.7	71.9	71.2	69.7	67.6	66.8	66.5
Activity rate (% population 15-64)	83.7	78.3	76.9	76.1	75.5	74.2	73.5	73.4
Unemployment rate (% labour force)	3.2	5.8	6.4	6.2	7.8	8.9	9.2	9.4
Youth unemployed (% labour force 15-24)	N/A	24.5	25.2	22.6	26.6	29.0	29.1	29.2
Long-term unemployment (% unemployed)	N/A	62.9	69.1	67.1	55.4	59.7	62.7	64.1
Self-employed (% total employment)	29.3	28.0	28.3	28.3	28.3	28.4	28.9	29.2
Employed part-time (% total employment)	N/A	3.0	2.4	2.9	2.5	2.8	2.9	3.1
Employed on fixed term contracts (%)	N/A	3.6	3.9	4.0	4.9	6.1	6.0	6.6

Source: Eurostat - Employment in Europe - 1997, European Commission, September 1997, page 125.

Table 6. Women - Key employment indicators

Women	1975	1985	1990	1991	1993	1994	1995	1996
Total employment	5511	6512	7104	7316	7097	7056	7072	7193
Employment rate population (% population 15-64)	30.6	33.5	36.2	36.9	36.3	36.0	36.0	36.6
Activity rate (% population 15-64)	33.5	38.9	42.1	42.6	42.6	42.7	43.0	42.7
Unemployment rate (% labour force)	8.6	13.5	13.8	13.2	14.8	15.7	16.4	16.4
Youth unemployed (% labour force 15-24)	N/A	35.4	35.7	30.3	35.1	36.4	38.6	38.9
Long-term unemployment (% unemployed)	N/A	68.0	71.9	70.1	59.8	63.3	64.4	67.1
Self-employed (% total employment)	30.2	15.8	16.5	16.9	15.9	16.3	16.6	16.9
Employed part-time (% total employment)	N/A	10.1	9.6	10.4	11.0	12.4	12.7	12.7
Employed on fixed term contracts (%)	N/A	7.0	7.6	7.7	7.9	9.3	9.1	8.9

Source: Eurostat - Employment in Europe - 1997, European Commission, September 1997, page 125.

Table 7. Labour force per age, sex and education level

Total Employed (Men + Women)						
Education	**Total 15-29**	**30-39**	**40-49**	**50-59**	**60-64**	**65 and over**
First level	3.9	6.4	23.5	45.1	55.2	54.5
Second level	60.6	49.5	39.6	27.2	20.6	17.6
Third level	35.5	44.1	36.9	27.7	24.2	27.9
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**

Total in search of work (Men + Women)						
Education	**Total 15-29**	**30-39**	**40-49**	**50-59**	**60-64**	**65 and over**
First level	5.1	13.3	43.6	68.8	83.4	40.0
Second level	50.4	50.5	40.8	22.0	11.1	60.0
Third level	44.5	36.2	15.6	9.2	5.6	0.0
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**

Men - Employed						
Education	**Total 15-29**	**30-39**	**40-49**	**50-59**	**60-64**	**65 and over**
First level	4.8	7.0	23.1	44.4	55.9	50.4
Second level	64.7	52.3	41.4	27.7	20.1	17.9
Third level	30.5	40.7	35.5	27.9	24.0	31.7
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**

Men - In search of work						
Education	**Total 15-29**	**30-39**	**40-49**	**50-59**	**60-64**	**65 and over**
First level	6.7	16.4	47.4	69.2	80.0	100.0
Second level	54.6	53.1	38.5	20.9	13.3	0.0
Third level	38.7	30.5	14.1	9;9	6.7	0.0
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100;0**	**100.0**	**100.0**

Women - Employed						
Education	**Total 15-29**	**30-39**	**40-49**	**50-59**	**60-64**	**65 and over**
First level	2.5	5.3	24.2	46.7	52.3	64.8
Second level	54.5	44.8	36.3	25.9	22.7	17.0
Third level	43.0	49.9	39.5	27.4	25.0	18.2
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**

Women -In search of work						
Education	**Total 15-29**	**30-39**	**40-49**	**50-59**	**60-64**	**65 and over**
First level	3.6	10.9	40.2	68.8	100.0	25.0
Second level	46.6	48.5	42.8	24.0	0.0	75.0
Third level	49.8	40.6	17.0	8.0	0;0	0.0
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**

Source: Annuario Statistico Italiano 1996 (1996 Italian Statistics Yearbook) - Year 1995, page 210.

Table 8. Part-time and temporary work, by sex

	Part-time work		Temporary work	
Sex	**Italy**	**European Average**	**Italy**	**European Average**
Women	12.1	32.0	9.1	12.4
Men	2.4	4.9	6.0	10.6
Total	6.1	16.7	7.2	11.4

Source: Istat - in *Rapporto sull'Italia - Edizione 1997 (1997 - Report about Italy)*, Il Mulino, Bologna 1997.

Table 9. Persons seeking employment by sex and condition – Year 1996 (absolute data in thousand)

Region	**Men**	**Women**	**Total**	**% of labour force**	**Unemployed**	**Persons seeking first job**	**Other persons seeking employment**
Italy	1,335	1,428	2,763	12.1	1,011	1,204	548
North-Centre	340	553	892	6.6	404	285	202
South	995	875	1,871	20.1	607	919	340

Source: Istat - Conoscere l'Italia - Introducing Italy 1997, Istituto Nazionale di Statistica, Roma, November 1997, page 72.

Table 10. Immigrant workers, from outside the European Community, employed in enterprises in: different regions and sector of activity (1994).

Region	**1992**	**1993**	**1994**	**1995**	**1996**
North-Centre	54,939	53,836	86,563	75,132	108,998
South	21,548	18,818	19,430	21,155	27,944
Italy	76,487	72,644	85,993	96,287	136,942

Source. Labour Ministry in Istat (1997), *Annuario Statistico Italiano (Italian Statistics Year Book) 1997*, Istituto Poligrafico dello Stato, December 1997, page 245.

Table 11. Non-EU citizens enrolled by geographic division

Geographic division	**1992**	**1993**	**1994**	**1995**	**1996**
North-Centre	100,738	70,757	85,206	98,237	112,866
South	22,948	14,211	14,636	13,028	16,638
Italy	**123,686**	**84,968**	**99,842**	**111,265**	**129,506**

Source: Labour Ministry in Istat (1997), *Annuario Statistico Italiano (1997 Italian Statistics Year Book),* Istituto Poligrafico dello Stato, dicembre 1997, page 245.

Table 12. Non-EU immigrants registered in the placement lists by country of origin

Country of origin	**Men**	**Women**	**Total**
Argentina	352	506	858
Brazil	363	1,340	1,703
Capoverde	74	134	208
Chile	207	242	449
China	1,634	1,216	2,850
Egypt	3,572	447	4,020
Ethiopia	558	614	1,172
Philippine	1,558	2,171	3,730
Ghana	1,747	1,220	2,967
India	1,436	323	1,758
Iran	809	513	1,758
Ex-Yugoslavia	9,815	5,5572	15,387
Lebanon	432	113	545
Morocco	27,519	5,377	32,896
Mauritius	1,285	854	2,138
Nigeria	1,235	1,136	2,371
Pakistan	2,105	156	2,261
Poland	564	1,288	1,852
Senegal	10,553	531	11,084
Sri Lanka	1,474	881	2,355
Somalia	1,400	1,685	3,085
Tunis	9,424	1,237	10,661
Turkey	430	158	588
Albania	5,889	1,980	7,869
Algeria	1,648	222	1,870
Other Nations	9,782	11,165	20,947
Total	**95,863**	**41,079**	**136,942**

Source: Labour Ministry in Istat (1997), *Annuario Statistico Italiano 1997,* Istituto Poligrafico dello Stato, December 1997, page 262.

Table 13. Non-EU immigrants employed in enterprise by region, professional status – Year 1996

Regions	**Generic blue collar**	**Qualified blue collar**	**Skilled blue collar**	**Employed**	**Total**
Piedmont	5,111	1,235	143	109	6,598
Valle d'Aosta	819	129	257	13	1,218
Lombardy	15,886	4,662	2,584	599	23,731
Trentino-Alto Adige	6,655	1,735	95	30	8,515
Bolzano-Bozen	3,731	690	10	5	4,436
Trento	2,924	1,045	85	25	4,079
Veneto	19,314	5,697	848	407	26,266
Friuli-Venezia Giulia	2,591	1,434	405	209	4,639
Leghorn	1,148	529	53	25	1,755
Emilia Romagna	14,376	3,435	258	315	18,384
Tuscany	6,133	1,694	217	205	8,249
Umbria	2,541	232	13	11	2,797
The Marches	3,325	690	106	48	4,169
Lazio	3,744	2,703	57	43	6,547
Abruzzo	2,389	444	31	16	2,880
Molise	90	8	0	2	100
Campania	2,162	29	2	22	2,215
Puglia	2,627	257	21	46	2,951
Basilicata	515	37	1	1	554
Calabria	682	31	3	4	720
Sicily	5,996	567	92	39	6,694
Sardegna	402	99	15	8	524
Italy	**95,506**	**25,647**	**5,201**	**2,152**	**129,506**
North-Centre	**81,643**	**24,175**	**5,036**	**2,014**	**112,868**
South	**14,863**	**1,472**	**165**	**138**	**16,638**

Source. Labour Ministry, in Istat (1997), *Annuario Statistico Italiano 1997 (1997 Italian Statistics Yearbook),* Istituto Poligrafico dello Stato, December 1997, page 263.

TRANSFORMATIONS IN THE LABOUR MARKET AND DEVELOPMENTS IN VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE

The aim of the following is to provide a general outline of the most significant active labour policy programmes with particular emphasis on life-long guidance and vocational training in favour of adult groups at risk from social exclusion, as defined previously. Before discussing this issue, it is necessary to recall the key points of the reforms under way in Italy concerning the labour market and consequent policies.

The institutional structure and how it is regulated, which have characterised the labour market for more than twenty years, have undergone an enormous transformation as part of the wider national reform of administrative decentralisation. This was ratified by law 59 of 15th March 1997, known as the "Bassanini" (law which takes its name from the Public Functions Ministry of the last Prodi government), as well as from its legislative decrees, whose aim it is to maximise and strengthen the functions of local self-governments (Regions and Provinces) within the framework of the present Constitution.

With the passing of presidential decree 616 of 24th July 1997 in Italy, the definitive shift of division to the Regions was ratified. In fact, this decree states that guidance activities, vocational training and labour market observation fall within regional competence, while public employment services, unemployment benefits[6] and incentives to facilitate the hiring of weaker members would be the responsibility of the State.

The consequences of this division were two-fold: i) from the beginning of the eighties, especially in Northern Italy, there was a boom of significant active labour policy initiatives (particularly guidance and vocational training) - the latter, however, were never integrated within a wider employment development strategy; ii) the prevalence of a public employment system entrusted to central administration whose programmes remained of a bureaucratic, certificatory and welfare nature.

As time went by, these became increasingly inefficient[7], penalising, above all, the weaker groups of the labour market and strengthening private employment channels, which - in most cases - were typified by the personal relationships system. To obviate these serious inefficiencies - and to make the Italian economic system more competitive - with the passing of the Bassanini-inspired law 469/1997 (23rd December 1997), decision-makers introduced four significant reforms.

In the first place, it redefined roles and competencies between centre and periphery by entrusting the Regions and local bodies with functions and tasks pertaining to employment and active labour policies within a general framework of guidance, promotion and co-ordination on the part of the Government (art. 1, para. 3). In particular, the roles and functions for which each institutional level is responsible are summarised in below.

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[6] The wage guarantees foreseen by the Italian legislation are the following: the Wages Guarantee Fund, mobility allowances, and unemployment benefits. **The Wages Guarantee Fund ("Cassa integrazione guadagni")**: a partial or total reduction in working hours, in cases covered by the legislation, activates an intervention by the "Cassa integrazione guadagni", managed by INPS, the social welfare authority. The law envisages two types of initiative, ordinary and special, with identical levels of income supplement: 80% of global remuneration due for hours not worked between zero and 40 per week. ***Ordinary wage supplements*** are paid to manual, clerical and managerial workers who are suspended or on short time through company situations arising from temporary events (not attributable to the company or the workers) or temporary market situations. ***Special wage supplements*** are paid to workers in industrial companies in cases of suspension or short-time working due to company restructuring, re-organisation or reconversion, or company crises of particular social importance. This form of wage guarantee can be continued for quite a long time. In both the ordinary and the special cases, the periods spent in receipt of wage guarantee funds can be counted for pension purposes, and the worker retains the right to receive health benefits and family income support. **Mobility allowance**: workers are placed "in mobility" (Law 223/1991), that is, workers who are dismissed and included on the "mobility lists" are entitled to receive income support during the difficult time when they are looking for a new job. This financial support is known as a "mobility allowance" and is paid by the State. The allowance is payable for a maximum of two years and its amount is reduced at the end of the first year. **Unemployment benefit**: workers who become unemployed because of termination of a fixed-term contract, dismissal or resignation are entitled to financial support or "unemployment benefit", provided they are properly registered with their local District Employment Division and meet the minimum contribution requirements. The amount of unemployment benefit is equal to 20% of their average pay over the three months preceding the beginning of the period of unemployment.

[7] It is noteworthy that existing job-seeker structures only manage to place some 5% of those registered.

Role and Functions of the State

With regard to labour polices the State is **obliged** to provide:	**Functions and tasks**
1. Orientation 2. Promotion 3. Co-ordination	1 With regard to labour, monitoring of non-EU workers as well as authorisation procedures for opportunities abroad; 2 Reconciliation of individual and multiple labour disputes; 3 Collective disputes of multi-regional significance; 4 Conducting of Job IT System (JIT). - intended as a set of organisational structures, hardware, software and network resources relative to active labour policy functions, both those involving central administration as well as those granted to the Regions and local bodies; 5 Contact with international bodies and co-ordination of relationships with the EU; 6 Surplus of part-time and structural staff (while waiting for the social rationalisation reforms). Joint Examination with the Region regarding CIGs, mobility and job security agreement procedures.

Role and Functions of the Regions

Public Employment Service	**Active labour policies**
1 Ordinary 2 Agriculture 3 Performers 4 (On the national list) 5 Compulsory 6 EU workers 7 Home workers 8 Domestic workers 9 Start-up and civil service recruitment 10 Pre-selection and matching labour supply with demand 11 Initiatives aimed to promote employment	1 Programming and co-ordination of initiatives aimed at increasing employment; 2 Collaboration in projects to employ former detainees and drug addicts; 3 Programming and co-ordination of initiatives in favour of those registered on the job seekers' list (particularly disadvantaged workers, those in mobility, the long-term unemployed, lagging areas etc.); 4 Orientation, programming and monitoring of traineeships, bursaries and socially useful work; 5 Filling-out and keeping of mobility list.

The same decree foresees that regional legislation in each Region (to be issued within 6 months of the decree going on the statute books) will define the administrative organisation and working methods of the functions and tasks granted to the Regions (the latter may delegate part of their duties to the Provinces). As regards this point, interpretations of the decree are not unequivocal. It would appear that the Provinces are assigned significant placement tasks, employment services and initiatives aimed at increasing employment and stimulating the matching of labour supply with demand. The Regions, on the other hand, are entrusted with programming, co-ordination, assessment and control.

Together with redefinition of the roles and duties as well as the transfer of financial resources from centre to periphery according to the subsidiarity principle, the decree provides for a narrowing down of administrative organisation with the suppression of most of the existing bodies and the constitution of new structures with the aim of guaranteeing integration between employment services, active policies and training policies thanks to collaborative links with a range of economic and social actors operating in the area. In this context, a crucial role is assigned to the social partners.

A third important aspect of the reform concerns a radical overhauling of the current public employment service which, from the end of the 1940s, was declared to be a solely government competence[8] managed in a monopolist and bureaucratic way by the peripheral structures of the Labour Ministry (District Employment Division) to whom enterprises were forced to address themselves in order to recruit labour. This "constraining" aspect of the public employment service then underwent a series of reforms which cannot be discussed in this instance. At present, the restrictive measures that have survived are the following:

- **Placement of underprivileged groups**. This covers people who have been unemployed for two years or more and workers undergoing relocation. These groups have a preferential right to recruitment when an enterprise with more than 10 employees decides to take on new workers, and 12% of any such new jobs must be reserved for this category of workers.
- **Compulsory placement.** This concerns certain categories of socially or physically disadvantaged people (the disabled, various categories of widows and orphans, refugees, etc.) and enterprises and public administrations with more than 35 employees are obliged to ensure that people belonging to these protected categories account for 15% of their total workforce. At present, a bill aimed at reducing the reserve percentage to 7% and simultaneously increasing the number of employees per enterprise to 15 is under debate in Parliament. The main innovation, however, is constituted by the adoption of a conventional model in employment services-company relationships (as foreseen by the reform) which aims at identifying, case by case, the most appropriate and effective solutions.

From a certificate-type placement managed in a bureaucratic manner with the sole function of registering flows, there has been a transition to the constitution of employment centres (prior to December 1998) managed by the Provinces (art. 4, para. 1e) based on user potential not lower than 100,000 inhabitants.

These should develop in a co-ordinated way: match labour supply with demand (placement); pre-select workers; co-ordinate vocational training (which should assume a training and permanent updating nature); promote and plan active labour policies. The first experiments and manifestations of these structures are the job centres which will be discussed in more detail further on.

Finally, the public employment service should compare itself and compete with the private one. In fact, art. 10 of the above mentioned decree grants private organisations the faculty of mediation between labour supply and demand, subject to authorisation by the Labour and Social Welfare Ministry which is granted if - and only if - the organisations have the requisite legal status.

In short, the reform not only ratifies the end of the public placement monopoly and the admission of private bodies to same, but delineates a totally new placement model which avails itself of sophisticated active labour policy instruments and employment services both with regard to labour supply as well as demand.

In particular, where job seekers are concerned, information services about the labour market and vocational training, individual and collective guidance courses, skills balancing and counselling managed by practitioners with specific professional qualifications are all envisaged. Moreover, the intentions of the legislator subtended to the reform - confirmed, furthermore, by the first experiments on a local level (e.g. the Labour Centres constituted in 1997 by the Province of Milan) - are to guarantee the integration of the active labour policies conceived within a unitary strategy of local development based on the following principles:

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[8] Until recently Italian law expressly prohibited non-public mediation in the workplace. That was until the first 11 articles on casual work pertaining to Bassanini Law 59/97 and Law 469/97 (belonging to the Treu package 196/97). Formerly such areas were governed by Art.27 Law 264/49 and Law 1369/60 concerning mediation by outside commercial bodies on behalf of workforces.

- centrality of the territorial dimension of all programmes;
- connection between the various institutional levels;
- collaboration among the social partners and economic, public and private actors in the planning and development of programmes;
- linkage between productive realities, education and vocational training.

From the above, it clearly emerges how active labour policies and, in particular, guidance and vocational training are assuming increasing importance in support of employment and the fight against exclusion of the weaker groups from the labour market. This trend is in line with a) the employment objectives and strategies implemented by the most recent Governments from 1993 onwards and b) with guidelines on employment for 1998 outlined in the European Council resolution of 15th December.

Furthermore, it is necessary to underline how the words guidance for adults and permanent vocational training (which will be discussed shortly) have, for the first time, become part of the language of laws and official documents. Despite this lag in Italy, significant initiatives in terms of active labour policy programmes have been developed. The may be summarised by three different models:

- the agency;
- the territorial agreement;
- the job centre.

A classification of this type forces us to combine initiatives that contain heterogeneous features and it does not take into account the overlapping which exists. It does, however allow us to trace some elements that are useful to our discussion which is based mainly on the architecture of the interventions. With this approach, the contents of the instruments that characterise active labour polices, with the exception of some references, are taken for granted.

The Agency

In Italy, the agency, i.e. a body capable of autonomously organising and providing services concerning the labour market in relation to a specific area, has taken on the form, for the most part, of employment agencies. These agencies were established during the first half of the eighties on the initiative of some Regions and autonomous Provinces: Trento and Bolzano, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Valle d'Aosta, Sardinia. In 1990 Sicily established a regional agency. The aim of the employment agency is to implement local policies in implicit contrast with the traditional modalities for labour policies used by the central administration. These offices created considerable momentum for the preparation of a broad range of activities of a promotional kind, as well as services designed to support the weakest workers in the labour market and to facilitate the matching of labour supply and demand. The nature of the activity carried out has thus led to the constitution of organisational models which are different from those typically found in public administration, swifter in terms of action and more efficient. These considerations are particularly true of the Trento and Valle d'Aosta employment agencies which, on account of the size of the area and the structures established, best represent the model that we are describing.

During the whole of the eighties these agencies acted as laboratories for the local policies to which they also lent credibility and visibility.

Let us briefly examine the basic elements that characterise this model. In the first place this type of agency has enormous power and legitimacy in the reference area. It has not only instruments, but also funds to manage and therefore exercises considerable power. The drawbacks concern the fact that this power creates relationship problems with other bodies and institutions who feel that their functions and autonomy are limited and threatened. In the second place the agencies dedicate themselves to perfecting intervention instruments: incentives, targeted training, work placement, socially useful jobs, counselling and so on. They therefore create specialists whose objective is progressively to increase the effectiveness of single instruments. The risk involved is an excessive fragmentation of interventions; in fact, over the years an attempt has been made to avoid this through the introduction of a logic by objectives which has allowed for an integration of instruments, that has, however, caused a series of problems. The emergence of specific professional qualifications linked to labour policies, absolutely unheard of in the Italian context, has created problems due to the civil-service type classification of these experts. There is, in fact, the possibility that some technical roles within the employment agencies are covered by people, winners of a regular competition, but coming from other sectors of public administration and altogether uninformed about active labour policies. Last, but not least, it is important to underline the social dialogue element. The social actors actively participate in the orientation and, in certain cases, in the management of these agencies. It is possible to state that the Trento employment office played an important role in transforming a high conflict area like Trentino into an area where collective bargaining is the most prevalent method of solving conflicts. The risk associated with the social partners playing such a marked role is that people chosen for intervention are primarily those representing collective bodies. This point will be discussed again with regard to territorial agreements.

The following table summarises the strong points and the problems inherent in the agency model:

Strong points	Weak points
strength and high profile	conflicts with other bodies and institutions
refinement of instruments	fragmentation
specialist professional profiles	risks of civil-service type
social dialogue	more focus on some targets at the expense of others

Territorial agreements

We define territorial agreements as those agreements between the social partners which aim at the active management of mobility in a specific area. These are, generally speaking, guaranteed and supported by public institutions, which also participate in terms of structures, personnel and the provision of incentives. These agreements were disseminated following the transformations that took place in accordance with Law 223/1991. This law, as explained before, modified the rules that govern both critical moments of the mobility process: redundancy and the hiring of workers by businesses. With regard to redundancy, law 223/1991 has reformed the detailed and gradual system of interventions in cases of company crises, centred on the Wages Guarantee Fund. Following approval of law 223/1991 the situation is, as briefly as possible, the following. In cases where the company has been affected by a temporary or structural crisis, where the same levels of employment will be sustainable once the crisis has been overcome, the intervention of the Wages Guarantee Fund is envisaged. Where a company believes that it will not be able to sustain the same levels of employment, the system activates procedures on mobility for workers surplus to requirements. These workers, unlike those covered by a wages guarantee fund, are, to all effects, dismissed from the company, but for their relocation, a preferential circuit of job placement is activated - mobility lists - aimed at companies with at least 35 employees. It is law 223/91 which assigns the social partners a role regarding crises in enterprises: both with regard to regulation of access to special income supplements and with regard to procedures for mobility, the law provides for obligations to negotiate and incentives to sign agreements. With the mobility agreements, the social partners have, however, acquired a much larger role which immediately assumed characteristics of temporary substitution with respect to the delays in the public placement system and the lack of instruments regarding active support for relocation which afflicts law 223/1991.

In fact, the agreements foresee, according to various ways and proportions, the creation of active labour policy instruments in support of the mobility processes. The minimum common denominator of the agreements, the basic structure present in all trade union/employers' associations' agreements, is represented by a more or less sophisticated device to favour matching labour supply and demand. This instrument ranges from the simple circulation of information, as in the case of the Assolombarda agreement for the Province of Milan signed by the social partners and the employment agency in March 1992, to the construction of widespread interventions like that of the Province of Varese which subsequently created an integrated system of services targeted at both sides of the labour market. The Varese initiative, activated in March 1991 following the crisis of two companies Aermacchi and Calzaturificio di Varese, subsequently assumed a territorial nature thanks to the choices of the parties in question (primarily those of the Province which should be considered the real driving force of the project) and to the new framework set up law 223/1991.

After the first pioneering experience, this model was extended throughout the whole of Northern Italy giving rise to numerous agreements both regional and provincial. The Primolavoro initiative in Novara can be considered an evolution of this model. Among the merits of the mobility agreements, worth particular note is that of screening the lists of people in search of employment and their reclassification on the basis of more complex and detailed criteria.

In virtue of the fundamental role played by the social partners, interventions within the framework of the territorial agreements were concentrated exclusively or at least principally on workers in mobility or drawing wages from the guarantee fund, thus classifying them as a sort of "illuminated" unemployed, in the literal sense of the object of specific illumination: these workers, in addition to benefiting from a privileged relocation network based on hiring incentives and income supplements, were able to avail themselves of the benefits of active labour policy instruments. A situation of injustice was therefore involuntarily created in the labour market.

A further problem linked to the social partners is that of the excessive weight assumed by collective bargaining. This produces social consent, which is essential to obtain results, but does not produce services. A certain difficulty in passing from the negotiations to the activation of services was noted, because the necessary project and technical resources had not been clearly defined.

This problem was partially dealt with by using highly specialised private companies capable of providing the skills for single interventions. The limitation of this approach is that, in many cases, once contracts with these companies have been terminated, only a small part of the knowledge and ability relative to active labour policies remained in the local areas.

The following table summarises the strong and weak points of the model:

Strong points	Weak points
Social consent	Exclusive target: workers in mobility and drawing wages from the guarantee fund
Activation of services	Excessive weight of trilateral bargaining sessions
Use of specific and sophisticated expertise	Insufficient activation of local resources

Job centres

Job centres concern a set of purely local initiatives whose protagonists are local bodies and, in particular, the communal authorities, assisted in various ways by provincial and regional levels. Activation of these centres or expansion of existing initiatives is, in fact, generally the result of the political choice of many communal authorities to assume direct responsibility for labour policies.

The most structured initiative of job centres is undoubtedly the establishment in Piedmont of Cilos (centres for local employment initiatives) which were promoted throughout the entire regional territory thanks to regional law no. 48 of 1991. A widespread support programme for the creation of job centres was passed by the Province of Milan.

Job centres perform different activities, in particular guidance and counselling for the unemployed as well as support for a match between supply and demand throughout the country; furthermore, in the best cases, they act as points of reference for the planning and development of interventions in the local labour market. The centres are mainly targeted at job seekers but also at businesses and local bodies.

As regards guidance and counselling to job seekers, the service can be structured in a more detailed way by providing for:

- the supply of information;
- guidance in the use of information;
- counselling about possible choices;
- preparing a personalised programme for entry or re-entry into the labour market.

Guidance and counselling also act as a screening procedure with the aim of identifying the real needs of the job seeker and planning specific interventions for those who have the greatest difficulties in finding a job.

Within the framework of support for a match between supply and demand, the centres often encourage or support efforts to screen or reclassify the information available about workers and job opportunities as well as organising their diffusion on a local level. Furthermore they conduct pre-selection activities for businesses.

With regard to interventions aimed at supporting job applications, the centres can help businesses, in particular small businesses, to analyse their own employment needs, both in terms of hiring of new staff as well as requalification of employees. The interventions targeted at the Communes mainly concern the planning of socially useful jobs.

Alongside these activities, the main function of some centres is to plan active labour policy interventions. In this case, the centres try not to replace or overlap with existing structures and services. On the contrary, their aim is to offer them planning resources, by encouraging different types of collaboration, co-operation, co-ordination and integration. In fact, the centres are created within territorial realities already characterised by a considerable supply of interventions, on which they can base their own projects. For example, the centres in general do not directly develop training initiatives, but "apply" for them within the framework of specific projects, at existing training centres. Although within a common frame of reference, the centres have different configurations due to the fact that they often stem from the evolution of different structures and initiatives.

The need to work simultaneously not only on the supply but also on the demand for labour leads some centres to deal with local development problems.

The weak points of the job centre model lie mainly in the lack of both human and financial resources. The generally high qualification level of the people who work there is frustrated by the impossibility of suitably dealing with user needs. In the second place, it is important to point out that some centres also find it difficult to gain recognition from other bodies and organisations that have been active for some time in the area. In the third place, the wide range of interventions together with a lack of resources forces many centres to make painful choices - to do a lot of things badly and few things well - and generates identity crises. Finally, the strong local rooting often accompanies excessive dependence on the communal authorities which activate the centres in response to a correctly identified need, but without sufficient knowledge of active policies fully to understand operational needs.

Strong points	Weak points
organisational flexibility	lack of human and financial resources
local rooting	dependence on communal authorities
planning logic	difficulty in gaining recognition
wide range of interventions	identity crises

Before concluding this brief report regarding the modernisation of labour policies, we would like to recall some significant innovations introduced on the subject of life-long vocational training targeted, in particular, at adults.

It is well-known that Italy is one of the EU countries with one of the lowest levels of ensuring provision for adult education. For this reason, the 1996 labour agreement between the Government and the social partners underlined the importance of life-long training. The following objectives were set:

a) **to develop ongoing training with the gradual and integral attribution of a 0.3% contribution, with the social partners acting on behalf of the employed and those at risk of becoming unemployed**. This is a strategy which Italy currently also lacks due to the structural characteristics of Italian industry. The diffusion of the small and artisan enterprise, particularly where duty-rotation is normal practice, has determined the prevalence of an implicit training model where most of a worker's responsibilities are acquired via a succession of differentiated work situations increasing his/her ability to manage fluctuations. Although this model has allowed for the acquisition of basically better skills than those reflected in the labour force's formal qualifications, it must be modified to embrace the new challenges of continuous innovation and globalisation.

b) **to create new updating opportunities**, also targeted at industrial reconversion through the preparation of annual plans both at enterprise as well as area levels, agreed to by the social partners. Such programmes concern both employees (blue collar workers, white collar workers, cadres and executives), autonomous workers, entrepreneurs as well as co-operative members. In this regard, in December 1997 the last Prodi government and the social partners undertook to define a **national plan for adult education**. Indeed, adults can avail themselves of financing for training enhancement (Law 440/97). Within this framework, the agreements already concluded at grass-roots level for the creation of permanent education centres assume particular importance. A learning centre equipped with multi-media technologies usable after-hours by workers was recently created in a building belonging to a large industrial group. This is a unique initiative (within the Italian panorama) of the implementation of the content and spirit of the aforementioned Agreement. Moreover, proposals are also afoot regarding the possibility of introducing a partial deduction of duly-certifiable individual training expenses. Finally, continuous, targeted training constitutes an important instrument for all new ("atypical") job descriptions which, as mentioned in the previous paragraph, creates an important mechanism to ensure that these new job-types do not remain precarious and unclassified. For this reason, in the regulations governing temporary work[9] a fund financing training initiatives has been established, enlarged by a 5% contribution of the salary paid to workers.

Finally, we would like to point out that one of the cornerstones supporting employment for adult groups are the numerous types of tax incentives and reliefs for enterprises, in addition to passive-type labour policies. The latter were the object of serious consideration by the last Prodi Government, which outlined the main points for a reform of social compensation. The current system, in addition to adequately covering only a small proportion of workers and creating problems of equal allocation, is almost entirely based on the passive procedures of purely financial distribution.

In 1997, a government commission to assess the "Analysis of the Macro-economic compatibility of Social Expenditure" presented a number of reform lines that touch upon many points of the present system. In particular, among the measures proposed is the extension of employment benefits to less-protected workers (small enterprises, artisans and the self-employed) based on insurance-type schemes that could, at least partially, be organised - with the agreement of the social partners - on a contractual basis.

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[9] Ratified by Law 196 art. 1.11 (June 24th 1997) and published in the *Gazzetta Ufficiale*, 4/7/97 edition in response to EU Directive 383 (June 25th 1991).

CASE STUDIES

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Thanks are also due to all those interviewed. Their experiences have not only brought the case studies to life, but represent a rich source of realistic input with regard to the theoretical issue of guidance and *vis-à-vis* suggestions to policy-makers and practitioners.

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Methodology for the selection and construction of the 12 case studies
The twelve case studies, services providing counselling, vocational guidance and training, have been selected only from the North of Italy, in particular in the regions of Lombardy and Piedmont, only because of time and budgetary constraints. It has to be underlined, however, that the Northern part of Italy has a richer tradition in the field of labour market policies than the South, as explained in Part I.

The selection and construction of the 12 case studies are based on two elements. First, the selection of the case studies was made on the basis of the following criteria:

1. ***Defined target groups***. five groups of adults risking exclusion from the labour market defined on the basis of an accurate analysis of the labour market and key social and employment indicators as outlined in Part 1:
   - Men between 40-50 years who have recently lost their jobs and women over 30 years who are returning to the labour market after a ten year break;
   - Employees and self-employed on 'atypical' contracts: i.e. workers employed on a casual, part-time, temporary or fixed-term basis, persons supplying maintenance and co-ordinating services, co-operative associated workers and self-employed consultants who are subject to advance withholding tax or individual VAT registration number.
   - Long-term unemployed;
   - Immigrants - Ethnic minorities;
   - Persons with physical and mental disabilities, psychological illnesses.

2. ***Criteria related to the effectiveness of employment counselling and adult guidance.*** The concept of effectiveness has to be related to the extent to which

users are prevented from being at risk of labour market exclusion or to their entry and re-entry in the labour market:

- *Centrality of the person* means the service has to be user-centred. In other words, the awareness that each person has specific needs is fundamental. Each person of one of the defined target groups cannot be considered part of a homogeneous group. Therefore the services will be more and more effective if the services are personalised on the specific needs of the users.
- *Local dimension*. The services and the planning of specific interventions have to be made on the basis of a specific territory and target groups.
- *Networking*. Linkages between service providers, social partners and institutions at different levels to avoid waste of resources.

Second, after having chosen the services on the basis of the above mentioned criteria the services or organisations were contacted. One or more visits to the centre or service were made to gather materials and information on the service and to submit for an interview the practitioners and the users of the centre. All interviews were recorded, following specific interview schedules.

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Case study no. 1

Centres for Local Employment Initiatives (CILO)

CENTRI DI INIZIATIVA LOCALE PER L'OCCUPAZIONE (CILO) -

CENTRES FOR LOCAL EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVES

This case study concerns the principal characteristics and active policy measures inherent in Centres for Local Employment Initiatives while another case study (no. 2) will consider one Centre (Chivasso, in the province of Turin) in greater detail.

A History, Context and General Structure

As approved by Piedmont Council, regional law no. 48/1991 enables municipal authorities to institute Centres for Local Employment Initiatives targeted in approximate relation to identified areas of unemployment. In terms of employment policy, this implies the devolution of decision-making from regional level to that of the Communes. The latter, hence, are in charge of the running as well as, more importantly, the delineation of such programmes, independently defining and developing resources wherever local conditions dictate there to be the necessity. Law no. 48/1991, therefore, may be described as the legal framework for the following blueprint[10]:

- to act at a local level in accordance with devolved decision-making;
- to operate according to given goals;
- to determine targeted sub-sets according to specific characteristics;

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[10] C. Maugeri, 'La promozione dei Centri di iniziativa locale per l'occupazione e le condizioni per una politica locale del lavoro', in *Disoccupazione e politiche locali del lavoro. Modelli, esperienze, progetti in Piemonte e in Europa*, M. Maiello and C. Maugeri (Milan: Franco Angeli, 1994)

- to define policy initiatives in relation to specific characteristics and needs of the target groups;
- to identify other potential local bodies able to contribute to the programme;
- to formulate well-organised programmes in terms of administrative accountability.

The Communes institute and manage the CILO and are held responsible for all facets of the Centres' institution and administration. The Centres are expected to establish face-to-face contact with the public showing themselves, that is, to be approachable and essentially trustworthy, in direct contrast to time-honoured bureaucratic tradition.

Local councils implementing such Centres can expect Regional financial assistance. The other support services provided by the Region include, first and foremost, planning development and resource access consultancy. The Region will additionally underwrite ongoing and pragmatic staff training programmes, centred upon active involvement, multi-disciplinary techniques as well as an ability to offer a comparative critique during the development phase. Furthermore, the Region's services will be made available in the non-partisan development of associated actor networks and in the co-ordination of inter-Centre links as a way of encouraging information-sharing. Finally, the Region will provide and update software for the management and use of data-banks.

B Functions, Target Groups and Content

The Centres' aim is to provide the widest possible variety of career- and job-seekers with a useful support service, differentiated according to different user categories. Understanding this diversity of user needs is an essential part of the Centres' work, involving a careful screening process based upon individual analysis and subsequent socio-economic clustering. Overall, two distinct functional sub-groups emerge from the Centres' activities:

- counselling (direct services);
- planning (indirect services)

Direct services may be divided into three discrete activities:

a a user-orientated job-seeking tool, articulated structurally, subjectively and objectively. By taking the user and his/her typical method of job-seeking into account, this function develops individually tailored optimal search strategies. This is particularly useful where the user demonstrates difficulty, uncertainty or lack of confidence in ultimately obtaining work;
b an information source regarding legal matters, training opportunities, labour market profiles etc.;
c an academic-professional guidance body for those in either education or employment who seek solutions in the short term.

In some cases, the above mentioned screening process means that this support and information role, in close liaison with other bodies and resources already *in situ*, may be aimed at specific types of job-seeker. Equally, however, screening also identifies the numerous job-seekers who are capable of acting autonomously.

The Centres' activity, though, is not only concerned with direct services. Through them, Piedmont Council intends to encourage and promote the development of a region-wide planning culture by maximising the potential of specifically-aimed plans, rewarding resource-sharing partnership proposals, developing common programme guidelines and instituting checks-and- balances procedures in the areas of resource administration and result publication.

At the heart of the Centres' philosophy lies the premise that determined involvement with the long-term jobless and those in society most at risk of becoming unemployed requires the assistance of numerous other actors and bodies, at both the planning and operational stages. Indeed, the existence of what is known as the weak segment of the labour force is not only due to given characteristics (such as being un/underqualified) but, above all, to the fact that they are restricted by a series of handicaps which neither they, nor their families, are able to redress. Such a strong correlation between weakness in the labour market and handicaps explains why no single body is able to combat job-seekers' difficulties. This constitutes, therefore, an important element which makes the staff involved more motivated to seek positive policy results through dialogue and co-ordination with other local bodies and resources. Thus, right from the planning stage, different authorities are encouraged to pool their efforts in an attempt to work on behalf of target groups whose lack of labour market penetration is the result of the convergence of a number of negative factors. In this light, the Centres attempt to propose task-linked plans of action to other parties involved, predicated upon the varying characteristics of differing sections of the unemployed and those at risk from same.

As regards organisation, the Centres are intended to be slimline and flexible and not a great deal is needed in terms of technology. Important, however, are rooms functional to the nature of the work in hand. Above and beyond technical requirements, the Centres' greatest resource has to be its personnel. The whole success of the venture depends upon the professionalism and dedication of their staff. Two basic types of (qualified and motivated) staff may be identified: one to look after planning, co-ordination, supervision and PR *vis-à-vis* other local bodies, and another capable of dealing with the public. As a way of departing from the traditional interpretation of what office personnel are like, motivated and service-orientated individuals would clearly appear to be significant prerequisites.

C Breakdown of Activities

The Centres' principal activity remains planning. The main schemes offered by the Piedmont Centres are illustrated below in table form. The purpose here is to provide a breakdown of the various activities undertaken to help the jobless find employment. As may be noted, initiatives are classified in direct relation to the target groups they are aimed at. Such sub-sets are not preconceived and are only arrived at in strict relation to local circumstances. In recognition of project diversity, therefore, each activity described ought to be considered in an extremely flexible light. Certain trends amongst programmes, nevertheless, do appear. Once again, it is opportune to point out that the majority of schemes summarised below are products of co-operation with other local bodies and agencies.

A number of the Centres' activities mentioned previously do not appear below. These include, for instance, informing, screening and counselling functions, as well as data production inherent to the matching of labour demand with supply (an activity common to all Centres, though not necessarily limited to specific target groups). Labour market studies are only listed where they have a direct bearing upon given sections of the work force. Also omitted are EU programmes e.g. Now, Youthstart, Horizon and, a more recent addition, Adapt. Such initiatives are jointly co-ordinated at regional and provincial level.

CILO	Target groups and programmes
Alba	Drop-outs programme; teacher training for the disadvantaged; Restart scheme for immigrants
Arona	Restart schemes for the disadvantaged, the long-term unemployed and Guarantee Fund recipients; Community Labour scheme for the long-term unemployed
Asti	Restart schemes for the long-term unemployed and Guarantee Fund recipients; Community Labour scheme for the long-term unemployed; Prison Enterprise Scheme for detainees
Borgomanero	Dropping Out of Education programme and Study programme for drop-outs; School-Work sandwich scheme for young people; Community Labour scheme for Guarantee Fund recipients
Bra	Community Labour schemes for the long-term unemployed and Guarantee Fund recipients; grants and temporary placements for the low-skilled
Carmagnola	Business training for young people; Community Labour schemes for the long-term unemployed and Guarantee Fund recipients
Casale Monferrato	Community Labour, School-Work sandwich scheme and Co-operative scheme for young people; Community Labour schemes for the long-term unemployed and Guarantee Fund recipients
Bassa Val Susa e Val Cenischia	Business training for young people; Restart scheme and Social Co-operative for the disadvantaged; Community Labour scheme for the long-term unemployed
Fossano	Restart scheme and Prison Enterprise Centre for detainees
Ivrea	Employment grants for drop-outs; Community Labour schemes for the long-term unemployed and Guarantee Fund recipients
Moncalieri	Community Labour scheme for young people, the long-term unemployed and Guarantee Fund recipients
Nizza Monferrato	Academic guidance and School-Work sandwich scheme for young people; Community Labour schemes for the long-term unemployed and Guarantee Fund recipients
Omegna	Career catalogue for young people; Community Labour schemes for the long-term unemployed and Guarantee Fund recipients; Business Training for the long-term unemployed
Pinerolo	Retraining schemes for the disadvantaged, immigrants, the long-term unemployed, Guarantee Fund recipients and detainees
Rivoli	Restarting in Business courses for drop-outs; School-Work sandwich schemes for young people; Community Labour scheme for Guarantee Fund recipients
Settimo Torino	Community Labour scheme for drop-outs; work placements for young people; Restart support for the disadvantaged
Tortona	Dropping Out of Education study for drop-outs; Community Labour schemes for the long-term unemployed and Guarantee Fund recipients
Verbania	School-Work sandwich schemes and job creation for young people; Social Co-operatives and *Retravailler* scheme for women; Social Co-operative for the disadvantaged; Community Labour scheme for Guarantee Fund recipients

Case study no. 2

CILO of Chivasso

CILO OF CHIVASSO

Commune of Chivasso

Palazzo Santa Chiara

Piazza Alberto Dalla Chiesa, 5

I - 10034 Chivasso (To)

Tel. +39-011-911.52.14

Fax +39-011-911.29.89

Opening Hours: Tuesday, 15:30 – 18:30; Wednesday, 09:30 – 12:30; Thursday, 15:30 – 18:30; Friday, 09:30 – 12:30.

Contact persons: Mariagrazia Croce, Claudia Piovano, Arezzia Celentano

Foreign languages spoken: Italian, French.

Philosophy

"Educating about job-seeking, developing individual independence and assertiveness, rather than simply acting as an intermediary between labour demand and supply".

A History, Context and General Structure

Chivasso is a small town near Turin (capital of the Piedmont region) which today boasts a population of 24,500 inhabitants. Prior to industrialisation in the Sixties, the industrial system of the area around Chivasso was centred upon agriculture, commerce and craft. With the advent of the automotive industry, Lancia opened its plant headquarters in Chivasso. However, following industrial restructuring, the plant closed down in 1991. The repercussions for economic development and employment levels were devastating owing to the fact that the automotive industry had almost entirely absorbed the work force to the detriment of other production areas. Adult and youth unemployment alike increased at a dizzy rate. On the one hand, those most strongly affected were male and female skilled workers over the age of thirty and, on the other, young people under the age of 29 (56% of the total number of those unemployed). It was in this type of socio-economic context that CILO officially opened its front office in the Chivasso District Employment Division (see case study no. 1). This acted as back-up to the Informagiovani (Youth Information Centre) front office founded in 1986 whose main aim was and continues to be directed towards youngsters in search of their first job by offering them an information service regarding new job opportunities as well as creative and recreational initiatives (sport and tourism). The staff complement of both organisations comprising CILO Informagiovani and CILO - Lavoro are linked to the Council for Community Affairs (Assessorato degli Affari Sociali) and consequently the Labour Council (Assessorato al Lavoro) and is divided up as follows: one part-time employee who runs Informagiovani and deals with contacts with schools, cultural and sports associations as well as the Youth Council of Turin (Assessorato alla Gioventù) and two full-time and one part-time employees who work at CILO - Lavoro. The people working for CILO are employed by the O.R.SO co-operative (see case study no. 5) in accordance with a convention stipulated with the Commune of Chivasso. All CILO and Informagiovani heads and practitioners are highly qualified (having either degrees or degree diplomas) in a specific field.

B Functions, Target Groups and Content

The underlying philosophy of the services and activities offered by CILO - Lavoro is educating people about active job seeking, reinforcing potential and assertiveness, always seen as a vector of specific needs. Consequently, the objectives proposed are of both a general and specific nature. With regard to the former, CILO - Lavoro's aim is to actively promote integration into the labour market through a targeted labour support service, directed towards the unemployed with particular focus on the long-term unemployed. Its specific objectives meanwhile are as follows:

- to improve appropriate job seeking abilities;
- to create the conditions for an initial professional re-evaluation of individuals;
- to induce individuals to think about their work potential, encouraging them to acquire a labour-oriented mentality (devise professional strategies).

CILO - Lavoro's fields of activity which are not targeted towards a specific user group, can be divided up into three main areas:

Information about the labour market

This service, offered by means of a front office open to the public on certain days of the week, is a place where the user can autonomously collect information about the following subjects:

- functioning of the District Employment Division;
- job seeking methods (job application, interviews, advertisements, open competitions);
- application references (company lists, facilitated application enquiries)
- autonomous work and community support
- labour legislation;
- workers' rights and obligations.

Support activities, guidance and counselling

After initial contact with the front office practitioner, the user may, at his/her own discretion, fill out a personal data card. Following this, an appointment is made for face-to-face *counselling* (in its broadest sense); during this interview a CILO card containing a series of in-depth information regarding the user's qualifications, past professions and future projects will be created. This card and the personal data card comprise a data bank, currently only available on paper, and represents useful back-up both to support matching labour supply and demand as well as reaching assessments.

Counselling includes a number of different spheres that are not standardised, but based on the needs of the individual user. These can be summarised as follows: analysis of professional skills; guide to training courses and job seeking strategies; work for the development of individual potential and self-esteem; career path consulting; and guidance about other organisations as well as useful services for personal and professional growth (e.g. local health units, social welfare consulting etc.).

Planning activities

Based on a specific analysis of the socio-economic context and in-depth knowledge of labour demand stemming both from private and public industry, a number of proposals concerning labour market integration/reintegration have been developed in detail.

C Access

CILO di Chivasso enjoys an excellent reputation not only because it offers part of a range of services offered by the Labour Council but also because of the high level of communication and promotion strategies implemented. The targeted marketing approach pursued by the CILO practitioners is based on the conviction that the user, particularly if he/she belongs to the weak (or very weak) segments of the labour market, is unlikely to contact "institutional" or "public" places to obtain information about labour demand. Hence the idea of discovering places frequented by workers in search of jobs such as recreational or meeting places - cafes, libraries, etc. Strategies and methods vary according to user groups.

D Networking

Importantly, CILO's work is characterised by the fact that it is deeply rooted in the area, since CILO's ultimate aim is to promote local employment initiatives through existing contacts - the public employment service office, trades-unions and companies - and the creation of initiatives increasingly suited to market requirements. It is therefore of crucial importance that CILO maintains and develops its network of relationships with the various socio-economic actors operating in the area, in addition to institutional ones such as, for example, the Employment Agency, the Turin Labour Council, the Piedmont Region and the training system. The greater the collaboration between the above mentioned, the more efficient and quick is job integration planning.

E Outcomes and Assessment

Every 8 months CILO di Chivasso conducts a systematic user follow-up in order to acquire an in-depth knowledge of labour market changes and the relative consulting procedures to use. According to the latest analysis (May 1997) based on October 1995 - September 1996 data, the following results emerged. 63.2% of the users interviewed had found work, 35.0% were in search of employment, while the remaining 1.7% were on training courses. The strong points of this service indubitably lie in the centrality of the size of the area and a holistic approach towards the individual user, in excellent labour market knowledge, in the close relationship with industry and the carrying out of assessment surveys. Finally, it is important to point out the high professional level of the practitioners' qualifications, both in the pedagogic as well as economic and administrative areas. Its weak points, however, include not only a lack of funds and technology (computers, telephones) but also suitable structures for the disabled.

Interview no. 1

Group category at risk of social exclusion: Long-term unemployed
Name, age and nationality: Roberto Alberand, aged 35, Italian
Qualification: Accountancy diploma
Resident in: Turin
Foreign languages: Basic English and French

"I am looking for a job and have been registered with the Public Employment Service since January 1991. Last year some friends from Castelrosso told me about *CILO of Chivasso* where they were holding a Regional Council-funded "Socially Useful Work" course. In order to obtain a diploma as an IT systems technician I subsequently attended the above. Thanks to the training days held by CILO experts in the field, my ability to face the world of work, write and circulate my CV increased considerably. I now understand how to prepare for an interview, how the employer sees me, how he perceives me and what he's looking for. Understanding what they are looking for helps me to avoid some of the 'errors' that I committed in the past. Lastly, thanks to CILO I have improved my qualifications, making me more marketable. Compared to CILO's method of counselling, the Public Employment Service is more difficult, more bureaucratic."

Interview no. 2

Category of groups at risk of social exclusion: Immigrant, long-term unemployed, female
Name, age and nationality: Zuzo Nazifa, aged 29, Yugoslav
Educational qualification: Secondary School Certificate
Resident in: Chivasso (To)
Foreign languages: Serbo-Croat, good command of Italian

"During the Bosnian war, three years ago, I fled from my country (Bosnia) with my husband, a civil engineer and my two 11 and 8 year-old sons. We live in a council house, which was assigned to us by the Commune of Chivasso. Although my husband is presently employed as a blue-collar worker, I have not yet found a job. I have a good command of Italian, which I learnt by attending a course lasting one hour a week. Last year I obtained my Italian secondary school certificate because the Italian government does not recognise the Yugoslav school certificate. I learnt about CILO one year ago through a friend who works at the Commune and who is in charge of council house assignment. Thanks to the enormous accessibility, patience and humanity shown by the CILO practitioners (who I now almost consider friends), I now have a better perception of the Italian labour market. Furthermore, I have now also become autonomous *vis-à-vis* job seeking. I am prepared to do any type of manual labour: cleaning, factory work, baby-sitting. Since I am not on the dole, I urgently need to earn money in order to help support not only my immediate family but also my parents. Although I have applied to both Lancia and Laurian (a spectacles factory), I have never been contacted for an interview. I can't find a job. I really can't find a job. Perhaps because I'm a foreigner..."

Interview no. 3

Category of groups at risk of social exclusion: Temporary worker
Nationality and age: Italian, aged 25
Civil status: Unmarried
Educational qualifications: Diploma as a textile consultant
Resident in: Chivasso
Foreign languages: Basic knowledge of English

"I learnt about Chivasso from my sister and her boyfriend. After obtaining my diploma, I worked as a waitress and after that in the textile sector, in a factory and at the post-office. However, these were always temporary jobs. No one has ever hired me on a full-time basis. I have been registered with the public employment service since the age of 14 but, even when I was unemployed, I have never received any type of unemployment benefit. I was recently offered a job opportunity, which I was unfortunately unable to accept because it was too far from home. Owing to the fact that I neither have a car or a licence I wouldn't know how to get there. The practitioners at CILO (which I visit once or twice a week) have helped me enormously. On the basis of my educational qualification they have told me who to contact, where to apply in order to find a job, how to approach the labour market, what newspaper ads to read, how to write a CV and how to behave at an interview. I used to break out in a cold sweat before each interview, now I don't have any problems speaking. Well, by dint of having so many interviews... They helped me by giving me some extremely useful tips. They told me what questions they were likely to ask as well as what questions I myself should ask. Furthermore, they obtain information about job opportunities. I have now been working at the post-office for three months. I am happy to do any type of work except for heavy-duty work such as in a foundry or illegal work. I find having a temporary job hard to accept for a number of reasons. First and foremost, I cannot get married, my boyfriend and I couldn't survive on only one income. Then, I have to stay at home the whole day. It's really depressing. Once you've cleaned the house, watched television, you go out and what have you done? Nothing. With these temporary jobs, I know that one month before the contract ends I will have to start looking for a new job. I am presently doing a company management and technical training course. The course lasts for one year (5 hours every morning) and you obtain a certificate in office IT systems. Since I am now working, I hope that I will be able to finish the course. I really hope to make it...."

Case study no. 3

Network Occupazione Lecco

Network Occupazione Lecco
Via Visconti, 51
I - 22053 Lecco
Tel. +39-0341-284.434
Fax +39-0341-286.365
Opening Hours: Monday –Friday, 09:00 - 12:30 and 14:30-18:30
Contact person: Alfredo Marelli
Foreign language spoken: English

Philosophy

"An effective active labour policy intervention should be based on collaboration and integration between numerous economic and institutional actors and social partners."

A History, Context and General Structure

The Network Occupazione Lecco association was founded in 1994 by various economic and institutional actors in order to remedy the serious economic and employment crisis underway in the Province of Lecco with its population of 300,000 inhabitants. This is located some fifty kilometres north of Milan, capital of the Lombardy Region, and boasts about 22,000 businesses. The logic underlying the association's constitution was to develop and implement active labour policies to support local economic development within a framework of collaboration and integration among public institutions and social partners in respect of individual skills, maximising and rationalising the services already offered by Lecco's Provincial Office within the District Employment Division.

The association signatories are the following: the peripheral institutions of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (the Lombardy Employment Agency, the Lecco Provincial Labour and Employment Office), the provincial administration (Provincial Administration of Lecco), some local bodies (Lecco Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Craft and Agriculture, District of Lecco), the social partners of Lecco and the Province (Employers' Organisation - Artisan Association - CNA - of Lecco, the Association of Builders and Similar of Lecco and the surrounding area, the Lecco Province Association of Small and Medium-sized businesses and the Lecco workers' organisations - Cgil, Cisl, Uil).

There are basically two components comprising the managerial and organisational framework: the Management Committee and the operative structure. The Management Committee consists of a representative from the Lecco Provincial Labour Office, the Lecco Provincial Administration, the District of Lecco, the Lecco Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Craft and Agriculture, the Lombardy Employment Agency and each of the entrepreneurs and trades-union associations. Its function is guidance, control and assessment, as well as outside representation operating in close collaboration with the bodies in charge of economic development in the area. Based on an in-depth knowledge of the labour market situation, the tasks of the committee are as follows:

- directing labour market policies and orientations;
- rationalising the use of existing tools/services and creating specific services targeted at matching demand/supply, as a way of encouraging new job opportunities;
- implementing tests and validations on the results of Network initiatives.

The Management Committee acts in close two-way collaboration with the Entrepreneurial and Trade Unions Associations to receive the necessary inputs and outputs to improve their knowledge and fuel system-wide opportunities offered as well as to facilitate the development of constructive trades-union relationships.

The headquarters of the operative organisation, whose duty it is to implement Association initiatives, is situated at the Lecco District Employment Division. This operates by using personnel from the Provincial Labour Office and includes three employees: one full-time and two part-time. The Association management software is provided by the Lombardy Employment Agency.

The financing sources of Network Occupazione Lecco mainly derive from the Lecco Provincial Administration, the Lecco Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Craft and Agriculture in addition to other indirectly involved bodies and institutions, as well as from regional legislation and EU schemes.

B Functions, Target Groups and Content

The activities conducted by Network Occupazione Lecco either directly, or in collaboration with other Bodies and associations, are as follows:

1. Activities pertaining to obtaining results from territorial development surveys
In conjunction with the relevant public bodies, the Association Network Occupazione Lecco collects data obtained from monitoring economic and employment trends within main sectors in Lecco Province, with a view to identifying areas and divisions potentially capable of creating new employment. This activity is co-ordinated by the Management Committee by means of the publication *News*.

2. Census Activities
The association carries out censuses and constantly updates the names, personal data, residence and telephone numbers, qualifications, profiles and professional characteristics, educational qualifications and pension status of workers undergoing relocation or affected by lay-offs (Extraordinary Wages Guarantee Fund). These are inserted in the computerised data bank, thus allowing for rapid quantification of labour supply. Collection of this data is integrated with data from the Labour Office, with information provided by the Entrepreneurs and Trades-Union Associations. This information is processed periodically and circulated in the shape of a catalogue and then transferred to the Employment Agency. It is then made available to companies.

3. Preselection Activity
Census-taking is integrated by a preselection activity conducted by the District Employment Division and transferred to association software. It is then made available to the Entrepreneurs' and Trades-Union Associations and the Employment Agency.

4. Information/data activities regarding job vacancies both in the public and private sector
The network collects and provides the user with information regarding job vacancies in the private sector by sifting through advertisements in the local press and keeping in close contact with the District Employment Division.

5. Guidance, personal motivational retraining and training for reintegration into the labour market.

As regards employment services, training courses involving motivational retraining and vocational guidance are provided for those in search of work. The aim of these is to understand personal situations, sound out workers' potential, direct them in the search for new job possibilities/opportunities and help them to overcome the idea of no longer being "indispensable". All this is backed up by personal interviews and individual consulting. Although these activities are targeted towards everyone, particular emphasis is placed on women and the long-term unemployed. Within the context of these courses, characterised by Job Club initiatives, active search techniques are taught along with how to compile a curriculum vitae, answer an advertisement, draft job applications, undergo interviews, etc. These activities are not directly conducted by the association but delegated to specialised training bodies, using funds, if any, provided by regional legislation.

6. Activities pertaining to training, professional enhancement and refresher courses. Professional requalification and reconversion.

The association provides information about professional training courses in the Lecco area as well as organising and planning professional training and professional enhancement ("returning to school" to obtain basic qualifications, a foundation in IT and foreign languages etc.) courses. It also organises professional sectoral requalification/reorganisation courses as well as promoting qualifications considered lacking with respect to market demand (these involve short in-company training courses). This activity also concerns refresher and /or professional requalification courses for workers subject to the Extraordinary Wages Guarantee Fund. These courses are conducted by vocational training institutions in the Lecco area as well as through the promotion of equal opportunity initiatives.

7. Analysis of the professions for which there is the strongest local labour market demand.

In order to implement vocational training and requalification for users in an appropriate manner, the Network conducts analysis pertaining both to the characteristics of the workers on the mobility/Extraordinary Wages Guarantee Fund list as well as the training requirements in the area, studying the duties and professional skills for which there is the strongest local labour market demand. This is obtained through a census of job opportunities using the software provided by District Employment Divisions in collaboration with the Provincial and Labour Office.

8. Outplacement activities

The Network provides informative support and consultancy for the start-up of outplacement activities targeted towards maximising individual professional and human qualities. This service is carried out by the Network, in conjunction with private organisms for the possible organisation of individual or collective training courses.

9. Fresh entrepreneurial initiatives

The network informs and provides consultancy for the setting up of small businesses and co-operatives. This service is carried out in conjunction with entrepreneurial associations, the Lombardy Employment Agency and private organisms dealing with the organisation of appropriate training courses for the self-employed.

10. Activities pertaining to the promotion of socially useful jobs

The Network liaises with Public Administrations and local Lecco-based bodies for the development of projects and socially useful jobs devised by the above mentioned Administrations, availing itself of workers undergoing relocation, workers subject to the Extraordinary Wages Guarantee Fund or the long-term unemployed.

Network users include businesses in search of people with specific professional skills whom they are unable to find through traditional channels (placement and newspaper advertisements) as well as job seekers. According to the data obtained from the Network Occupazione Lecco IT data bank, in September 1997, the users in search of jobs are both male and female, Italians and foreigners. From a quantitative point of view there are more women (64 per cent) than men (36 per cent). Where the foreign immigrant population is concerned, meanwhile, this ratio is inverted: 83.7 per cent men and 16.3 per cent women. Approximately 50 per cent of the male users are under 20 and up to 25, while the average age for women is slightly higher - between 20 and 30 (table 14). With regard to education, users hold medium-low (see table 15) qualifications. Only 3.3 per cent of the men have a degree as compared to 2.4 per cent of the women (see table 16). The majority of disadvantaged groups (both male and female) in the labour market who contact the network are: the long-term unemployed, workers undergoing relocation, workers who have been made redundant and those who have been laid-off during the revolution that has taken place in industry.

Vocationally, according to pre-selection data, skilled workers (42 per cent) are in greatest company demand. There is little or no call for executive positions (0.34 per cent).

Table 14. Users of Network Occupazione Lecco, by age and sex, September 1997

Age group	Women	Men
Over 55	1.33%	3.93%
from 45 to 54	6.67%	12.45%
from 40 to 44	8.08%	5.15%
from 35 to 39	9.83%	6.44%
from 30 to 34	16.02%	10.46%
from 25 to 29	19.93%	15.04%
from 20 to 24	24.49%	21.23%
under 20	13.56%	25.20%

Sources: 1997 Network Occupazione Lecco data bank processings.

Table15. Users of Network Occupazione Lecco, by civil status and sex, September 1997

Civil Status	Women	Men
Unmarried	62.93%	66.78%
Married	35.17%	31.43%
Separated	1.38%	1.23%
Divorced	0.52%	0.55%
Total	100%	100%

Sources: 1997 Network Occupazione Lecco data bank processings.

Table 16. Users of Network Occupazione Lecco, by educational qualifications and sex, September 1997

Educational qualifications	Women	Men
Primary school	9.45%	15.90%
Secondary school	50.70%	51.89%
Vocational training courses	5.29%	2.04%
High-school diploma	31.67%	26.65%
University diploma	0.49%	0.17%
University Degree	2.41%	3.35%

Sources: 1997 Network Occupazione Lecco data bank processings.

C Access

The Network Occupazione Lecco association conducts a promotion and advertising service for both workers and enterprises, the aim being to inform them about the association's existence and services offered. The following tools are used for this purpose: periodic announcements are sent to workers registered in mobility lists or subject to the Extraordinary Wages Guarantee Fund (or job security agreements), to workers who have been dismissed from small enterprises *ex lege* no. 236/1993 and to the enterprises; posters and brochures providing information about the Network in District Employment Divisions; ads in local newspapers and a workers' handbook. This promotion and advertising service is carried out in conjunction with the Lombardy Employment Agency (Agenzia per l'Impiego della Lombardia) and the employers' organisations and trades-unions associations.

D Networking

Network connections with various national economic and institutional bodies are extremely widespread. One need only consider the constitutional bodies comprising the association itself.

E Outcomes and Assessment

The strong points characterising the association lie i) in the fact that it is deeply rooted in the area and ii) in maintaining a close network of relationships with various economic and social actors in the area. Its main weak point is the emphasis placed on the use of a computerised pre-selection activity.

Case study no. 4

Social Co-operatives in Italy

SOCIAL CO-OPERATIVES IN ITALY

Foreword

This case study differs from the others because it does not relate the experience of a vocational guidance and counselling centre, rather, it gives a general overview of the phenomenon pertaining to community support in Italy. It describes how this phenomenon is an active aspect of labour policies and relates the fight against marginalisation of the weaker segments of the labour force.

A General Characteristics of Social Co-operation

The first use of the co-operative idea in providing individuals with social welfare services dates back to the Sixties[11]. It arose as a direct result of the growing demand for social services made by that part of society which could not obtain satisfactory solutions from either welfare or existing labour policies. In fact, the aim of the first co-operatives was to benefit people in needy situations while, at the same time, setting themselves up as representatives of an alternative life-style to the conventional one in addition to promoting emancipation for the marginalised. The co-operative idea, therefore, stemmed from a basic and radical critique of contemporary capitalist society although existing underlying ideological and cultural perspectives were clearly defined: that of social Catholicism on the one hand and Marxism on the other. Reference to concepts such as entrepreneurship and efficiency came to the fore along with the emergence of the co-operative movement, which underwent particularly rapid growth during the Eighties. At the end of the Eighties, official studies revealed the occurrence of a movement-wide entrepreneurial change bringing with it the introduction of the 'social enterprise' concept: the key issue of the debate was no longer exclusively the ability to meet social needs but meeting them in the most effective and economical way possible without, however, foregoing the fundamental values of solidarity.

Above and beyond the ideological inputs influencing various stages of the movement's development, for a definition of the underlying essential characteristics of community support it is important to refer to the legal situation in terms of Italian national law (no. 381, 8 November 1991), approved by parliament after considerable inter-party wrangling. Art. 1 – Law no. 381/1991:

> The role of Social Co-operatives is to represent the public interest in terms of solidarity and social integration, via:
>
> a the administration of welfare and education services;
>
> b the carrying out of various agricultural, industrial, commercial or service initiatives central to placing disadvantaged individuals in employment.

According to Italian law, co-operatives are essentially of two types: "A" Co-operatives providing social assistance and health services, and training targeted to the elderly, disabled, drug addicts and minors; "B" Co-operatives providing various types of active functions as a means of placing the disadvantaged in employment (people with physical and mental disabilities, people with mental illnesses, maladjusted minors, prisoners, drug addicts, non-EU immigrants and marginalised adults). Therefore, the aim of this study is to deal exclusively with these issues which will now be examined in greater detail.

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[11] One of the first and most important initiatives was the S. Gemma Galgani cooperative in S. Benedetto del Tronto, promoted by Giuseppe Filippini in 1966. For more details see "Le cooperative di solidarietà sociale", Edizioni del Consorzio Gino Mattarelli, Forlì, May 1989.

From the above mentioned legal measure and in-depth literature on the subject, these are the most significant points characterising social co-operation and its underlying philosophy.

1) **The public interest in terms of collective aim**. The legislator grants the social co-operative the role of public - and not private, or single group - interest to be developed over time within the private domain.

2) **Focus on the local level (the community)** for the purposes of assessing public interest. The local level provides the basis upon which the functions and development of co-operatives may be organised. A social co-operative is distinguished by private businesses owing to its place in the community and the relationships it establishes within that area.

3) **Maximising the human qualities and social integration of the individual**. This term is of a general, global nature. Such globality is expressed through the lack of reference to specific needs, highlighting the fact that co-operatives cannot simply be service agencies. Instead, the emphasis is on promotion and integration as constants behind the co-operative initiative. Its general nature, on the other hand, is expressed through its being person-orientated. Referring, in other words, not merely to the disadvantaged but, rather, to all those who need support for personal or social growth. The disadvantaged, some of whom require specific assistance (i.e. job placements), also fall within this diverse spectrum (Maiello 1997).

4) **Restraints on profit distribution**. Based on the above, the primary aim of the enterprise is of a collective and social nature, while correct financial administration, according to efficiency (cost-effectiveness) criteria as well as possible profitability are instrumental in the attainment of the primary goal. For this reason, in fact, existing law provides for a limitation to the redistribution of profit earned by co-operative members.

5) The members, who have equal voting rights, **participate actively in the definition of policies and decision-making procedures**; they contribute in equal measure to corporate capital and allocate surplus amounts to new investments for the development of the co-operative..

Social Co-operation (both A and B-type co-operatives) conducts three main functions vis-à-vis the labour market (Maiello, 1997):

1 Job creation targeted, above all, at disadvantaged groups;

2 Human resource development;

3 Service management for the labour market (see case study no. 5 "Cooperativa O.R.SO").

B The Role of Social Co-operation in Job Placement

Job placement promoted by community support and sanctioned by art. 1 of law no. 381/91 is not consistent with the classical model[12], as it transfers job placement from restraint and welfare-type policies to active labour policies and, in particular, entrepreneurial development. The aim of the social co-operative is to increase labour demand by creating specific opportunities for disadvantaged people, who are offered the possibility of entering the labour market through membership of an organisation combining production capacity, an ability to improve weak labour force prospects and support initiatives for those registered. The structural differences between the classic model and the co-operation model are summarised below.

---

[12] References to the classic model imply job placement based on social welfare and restrictive policies in accordance with laws no. 482/1968, no. 466/1980, no. 763/1981. It is necessary to point out that current legislation provides for compulsory employment quotas, presently undergoing reform, for certain categories of socially or physically disadvantaged persons (the

Characteristics of labour placement models

	Classic model	**Social co-operatives model**
Type of policy	Supply-side assistance	Demand-side development
Main operative body	Public service	Community
Professional characteristics	Specialist social organism	Professional workers with wide-ranging business skills
Communication	Worker/public relationship	Cost sharing
Category type	Traineeship	Worker
Method of payment	Job allowance	Ordinary and starting salary
Expenditure guidance	To people: - disadvantaged individuals - social workers	To the enterprise: - investments - training costs
Resource generation	Exclusively Government funding	Government budget to Government and profit-linked funding

Source: Scalvini, 1995 a.

The two models thus deal in a basically different way with the divide defined by market productivity: the classic model only acts on labour supply, the social co-operation model simultaneously and jointly on supply and demand. This results in considerably lowering the minimum access threshold to the labour market for disadvantaged workers.

C General Scale of the phenomenon, with particular focus on aspects of job placement

The tables below summarise social co-operation characteristics in Italy in terms of size, territorial distribution, functions and use, with particular regard to job placement.

Table 17. Community support in Italy 1993 - 96 (absolute values)

No. of social co-operatives	**1993**	**1994**	**1995**	**1996**
	2,126	2,330	2,834	3,857

Source: Ministry of Labour (years shown at 31st December 1996); Source: Centrali cooperative, Verbali di revisione, data collected and processed by CGM in 1996, years shown.

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disabled, orphans and widows of various categories, refugees, etc.). Any enterprise and public administration employing more than 35 people is required to employ persons from the protected categories in a proportion representing 15 percent of its total workforce (G. Geroldi and M. Maiello - Eurocounsel Phase III, 1995).

Table 18. Social co-operatives by typology, 1996 (absolute values)

	Absolute values	**Percentage values**
Type A co-operatives	2,298	59.6
Type B* co-operatives *	1,326	34.4
Mixed co-operatives and consortia	223	6.0
TOTAL	***3,857***	***100.00***

Source: Ministry of Labour (data available at 31 December 1996).

Note: Inps data are also available regarding the number of job placement social co-operatives. According to this data there are 754 B-type co-operatives in Italy.*

Table 19. Social co-operatives by geographical area, 1996 (absolute and percentage values)

	Absolute values	**Percentage values**
North	1,985	**51.5**
Central Italy	742	19.2
Southern Italy and Islands	1.,30	29.3
Total	***3,57***	***100.0***

Source: Ministry of Labour (data available at 31st December 1996).

Table 20. General data on B-type social co-operatives, 1993-96 (absolute values unless otherwise indicated)

	1993	**1994**	**1995**	**1996***
Co-operatives	287	518	705	754
growth rate %	-	80.5	36.1	6,9
Total employment	4,501	7,115	9,837	11,165
growth rate %	-	58.1	38.3	13.5
Disadvantaged workers	1,675	3,204	4,686	5,414
growth rate %	-	91.3	46.2	15.5
Employees by co-operative (average values)	15.7	13.7	13.9	14.8
Disadvantaged individuals by co-operative (average values)	5.8	6.2	6.6	7.2
Disadvantaged individuals as a % of total	37.2	45.0	47.6	48.5

Source: Inps, data collected from the Università degli Studi di Trento.
Note: Data for the period January-October.*

Table 21. Percentage of disadvantaged workers in social co-operatives, 1993 and 1996

Categories of disadvantaged workers %	**1993**	**1996**
until 30%	35.9	8.5
31-40%	20.9	27.3
41-50%	18.8	22.8
51-60%	5.2	13.8
61-70%	6.9	11.2
71-80%	3.9	3.8
81-90%	2.8	4.0
100%	5.6	8.6

Source: Inps, data collected from the Università degli Studi di Trento.

Table 22. B-type social co-operatives by macro-regions, percentages

Macro-regions	**1993**	**1996**
North-West	54.9	44.4
North-East	29.9	29.2
Central Italy	12.3	19.0
Southern Italy and Islands	2.9	7.4

Source: Centrali cooperative, Verbali di revisione, data collected and processed by CGM in 1996, years shown. CGM 1994B.

Furthermore, from research conducted by the Consorzio Gino Mattarelli (CGM), it emerged that, in 1996, type B social co-operatives in Lombardy accounted for 48.1 per cent of all co-operatives throughout Italy.

Table 23. Type B social co-operatives expressed by sector, 1994 (absolute and percentage values)

Sector	**Absolute Values**	**Survey percentage**
Agriculture	85	22.7
Craft	155	41.4
Business	64	17.1
Industry	64	17.1
Services	215	57.5
Total number of cases	*574*	*574*

Source: Centrali cooperative, Verbali di revisione, data collected and processed by CGM in 1996, years shown.

Table 24. Type B social co-operatives expressed by main clients, 1996 (percentage values)

	Percentage
Citizens	2
Tertiary organisations	8
Enterprise	28
Public body	62
Total	131

Source: CGM, sample of associated co-operatives, 19096 questionnaires, 1996 data.

Main bibliographical sources

"Imprenditori social - Secondo rapporto sulla cooperazione sociale in Italia - CGM, Torino, Edizione Fondazione Giovanni Agnelli, 1997".

"Le cooperative di solidarietà sociale", Forli, Edizioni del Consorzio Gino Mattarelli, 1989.

Case Study no. 5

Co-operativa O.R.SO

COOPERATIVA SOCIALE O.R.SO
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Foreign language spoken: English

Philosophy

"Combating social exclusion phenomena and supporting the social integration of citizens."

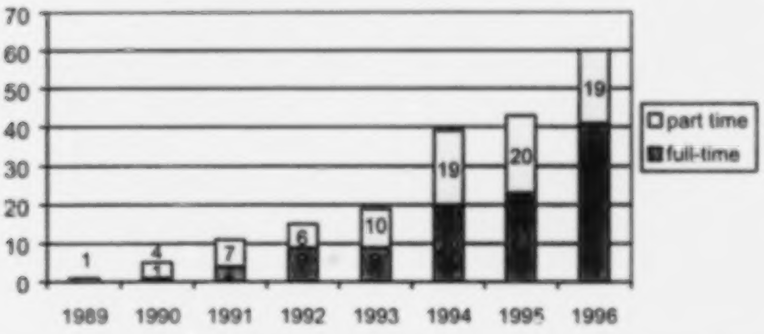
A History, Context and General Structure

The O.R.SO social co-operative and its attendant services act within a defined geographical area: the provinces of Turin, Cuneo and, in the future, Asti. Broad swathes of this area have been identified as falling within EU Objective 2 ("areas affected by industrial decline"). This implies, therefore, widespread initiatives in favour of employment - especially for young people - in addition to action targeted at reintegrating workforces traditionally engaged in manufacturing and, above all, in the mechanical industry.

The O.R.SO co-operative was founded in 1987 by GIOC, Christian youth workers, a movement engaged in combating youth unemployment. During the second half of the eighties GIOC organised a series of initiatives in the Piedmont region. These basically consisted of pre-professional workshops (the co-operative's original area of activity), guidance activities for young employed people and the running of a holiday home owned by GIOC. As time went by the co-operative enlarged its scope to include active labour policy based initiatives and extended its service target groups to all potential users, even adults. Once it has reached a certain size both in terms of workers as well as turnover, the co-operative will be divided up according to geographical criteria (there will be a new co-operative in the Province of Cuneo).

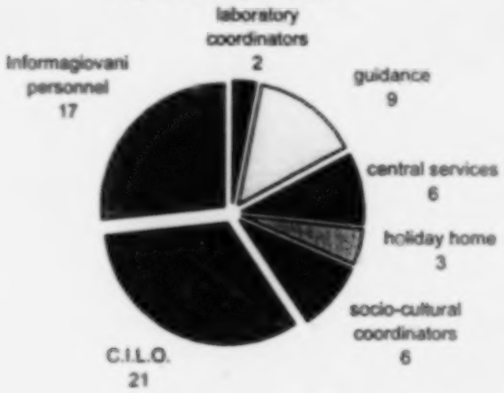
The co-operative has 45 member workers. It also has ten voluntary workers. GIOC is a member of the co-operative and in meetings is entitled to cast five votes. The co-operative also avails itself of external freelancers for specific projects. At the end of 1996 the O.R.SO co-operative employed 60 people of whom almost one third had a part-time work contract (see Fig. 1).

Fig.1 Employees 1989 - 1996



The jobs prevalently carried out by O.R.SO co-operative workers are described in the following chart The total number of workers is higher than the percentage previously shown, insofar as one employee may be employed in various sectors of activity:

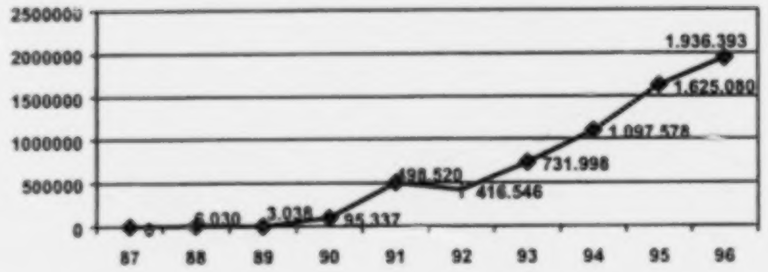
Fig.2 Main job held



The division of two workers by area of activity provides a first indication of occupational incidence in terms of the services offered by O.R.S.O.. The graph clearly shows that the services with the largest occupational impact are CILO and Informagiovani (Youth Information Centres).

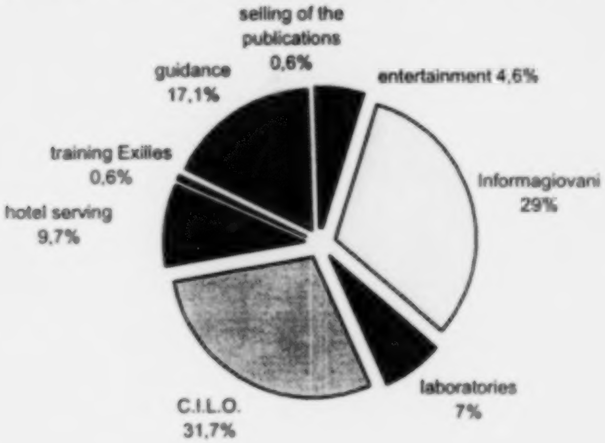
The O.R.SO co-operative '96 turnover touches on two billion lire. Since its inception, the company's general income appears to be constantly increasing; this is particularly true of the last three years ('94-'96) where turnover has almost doubled (see Fig. 3).

Fig.3 1978 - 1996 Turnover (x1000)



Of particular note is the percentage incidence of each area of co-operative activity with respect to total revenue. In general, the presence of a link between service profitability and increased occupational impact is fairly clear. In fact, management of Informagiovani and CILO reaches a figure roughly equivalent to 60% of income.

Fig.4 Composition of '96 turnover by areas of activity



The above data may be seen to justify the co-operative's activities and give an idea, though approximate, of the social implications of the activities conducted.

B Functions, Target Groups and Content

The service philosophy developed by the social co-operative is centred upon achievement in its own sphere of influence through the principle of fighting the phenomenon of social exclusion and aiming at social integration in the interests of the wider community.

The co-operative represents a highly specific initiative of social entrepreneurship because it is specialised in guidance and offers services to different types of individuals (young people, adults and disadvantaged groups). Among the most innovative activities, worth particular note, are those involving outplacement: the only such initiative implemented in Italy by a private social organisation.

The service activities co-ordinated are fairly wide-ranging and three main areas may be identified:

I. Information service/active policies area

Management of Informagiovani: information-gathering concerning the various opportunities (work, recreation, tourism, school) in which young people are interested is organised through these centres. Moreover, careers guidance, vocational and educational training paths, plus the exploitation of local opportunities are co-ordinated by means of personalised counselling.

Management of CILO (Local Employment Interventions Centres): targeted at all citizens in search of work; the main objective of these is to develop strategies aimed at integration or reintegration into the world of work. Moreover, they provide counter, information and counselling activities for the unemployed as well as young people in search of their first job. They also act as a link with other services in the area dealing with labour problems and unemployment, in addition to employers' associations and individual businesses. Particular attention is focused on guidance and placement of the disadvantaged.

Reintegration of redundant staff on behalf of private companies Since 1994, a Labour Support Service for the unemployed (Fiat redundancies) - under the aegis of the social co-operative consortium ICS (which the co-operative is part of) and in liaison with the Commune of Turin - has been run within the context of building-yard activities. The clients for this service are the Communes (which promote Informagiovani and CILO), the Provinces, private enterprises and employers' associations (such as API) for which outplacement initiatives are developed. These activities are all contractually-based.

2. Guidance and training area

This sector includes the management of:

- educational and professional guidance in intermediate schools; pre-professional workshops and short job introductory courses targeted at young people;
- in-house corporate training and scholarships; guidance services for social and professional integration aimed at non-EU citizens;
- information services and administrative assistance targeted at university students;
- reception and guidance modules as well as job training/remotivation;
- social skills courses for job seekers;
- courses for Vocational Training lecturers and teachers aimed at the acquisition of support instruments for the training of disadvantaged individuals; civil education and safety modules;

Customers are the Region, the Province and vocational training centres.

3. Entertainment Area

This sector falls within the pedagogic-educational area and is prevalently aimed at preadolescents and teenagers. The objectives of the initiatives are: to create opportunities for gatherings and socialisation, to offer places where adolescents and young people are able to express their creativity and to develop educational initiatives aimed at social participation. Youth centres, hostels and summer camps are managed within this area, as well as the activities of a Communal Youth Council, which involves primary school and secondary school pupils.

C Access

Subscribers learn about the existence of the co-operative from others who attend it, as well as through local bodies (Communes) in the Turin area.

D Networking

The O.R. SO. co-operative works closely with institutions such as the Piedmont Region (Vocational Training and Labour Council) for which it recently conducted important research, the Provinces of Turin, Asti, Cuneo and various communes in the Turin area. In addition, it liaises with the social partners (national/specialist trades unions and employers' organisations).

E Outcomes and Assessment

The strong points of the development of this particular entrepreneurial initiative are:

1. Particular emphasis attached to the motivational abilities of staff employed by the co-operative. Staff are required to be professionals prepared and continually willing to update their skills.
2. The constant search for partnerships with public and private organisations who may be considered not only as potential customers, but also as privileged mediators in the creation of a network able to strive for positive results in terms of outplacements, training and recreational activities.
3. The adoption of a work method capable of keeping account of the individual characteristics of those people who apply to the co-operative. The resultant service is therefore person-oriented. Professional requisites are a knowledge of labour market mechanisms and considerable planning ability in presenting training programmes for the more disadvantaged groups. Added to this is extensive social, interpersonal and educational know-how.

The O.R.SO co-operative's techniques and methodological approach have been shown to be relatively successful in integrating individuals traditionally perceived to be marginalised. It is recommended, furthermore, that these methods might be further refined using certain re-training techniques employed in promoting individuals from more advantaged backgrounds e.g. professional and managerial staff.

Case study no. 6

GALDUS - Formazione & Ricerca

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Foreign language spoken: English

Philosophy

"Restoring individual independence and assertiveness as part of a personal development programme aimed at the 'whole person': not only one's mind, memory and will, but one's feelings too".

A History, Context and Structure

Formally constituted in 1990, GALDUS – Formazione & Ricerca (Vocational Training & Research) was originally a type-B community cooperative operating in the field of graphic art publishing and specialising in the production of works of a graphic and advertising nature. Set up in a particularly problematical area of Milan's south-western outskirts, infamous for its high incidence of youth crime, its purpose was to create training and employment opportunities for disadvantaged individuals and youngsters in search of their first job.

From 1994 onwards, a dual method of tackling unemployment grievances became ever more evident at GALDUS. Alongside assisting the disadvantaged, training, guidance, work-shadowing, work placements in graphic arts, telematic and other companies in the business sector, as well as social and educational support, all became more important aspects.

In part, such a development meant revising the statute, turning the GALDUS centre - in accordance with Italian law no. 460/1997 - into a Public Non-Profit Organisation whose objective was to pursue social cohesion through training initiatives aimed at individuals disadvantaged due to physical, financial, social and family reasons. The other change saw an increase in personnel, largely financed by greater public revenue. This is derived in particular from the ESF and Youthstart as a complement to Lombardy Regional Council funds.

GALDUS's staff-structure is broken down into three discrete areas: technical / bureaucratic, organisational / administrative and teaching / training. In addition, working parties are set up: placement co-ordinators who follow course subscribers' progress (x3) and tutors, vocational supervisors, teaching staff and freelance workers (x3). To carry out reception and simple paperwork, GALDUS may also call upon those who opt to do military service as conscientious objectors. No single member of staff has a permanent contract. Everyone is self-employed, highly professional and specifically qualified.

B Functions, Target Groups and Content

The vocational training and guidance courses aim to assist both young drop-outs as well as the disadvantaged (e.g. the physically and mentally handicapped, the long-term unemployed, the unqualified young, under-qualified adults and former drug-addicts). The areas covered are very broad indeed: digital photography/telematics/computerised answering systems/sound technology; carers for the young and the elderly; guidance consultants and tourism. These areas have been chosen in line with two criteria: i) requests received by GALDUS and ii) local business requirements.

The courses, run by highly-qualified trainers, are carefully streamed into small groups after due regard to motivation, skills and experience. With the benefit of up-to-date facilities, course-members alternate between theory and practice (the latter entails allocation to either in-house or external placements). Upon completion of tests at the end of the training course, each subscriber receives a performance-linked Certificate of Assessment, recognised by Lombardy Region.

Two basic precepts underpin the training course approach. Firstly, there is an attempt to define the reasons why the disadvantaged and the young both remain peripheral to the labour market. There is clear evidence demonstrating how marginalised individuals - be they young or adult - undergo a process of rejection where anything public or institution-related is concerned.

Secondly, the training courses seek to adopt the holistic approach, with the objective of empowering the subscribers. This implies a process which embraces tackling the roots of being underprivileged, whereby the individual (or group) is encouraged to develop an independent sense of decision-making, self-determination and self-control. Simultaneously, individuals are taught how to value themselves, control situations, learn self-esteem and become efficient, thus reducing feelings of impotence, lack of confidence, fear, negative tension and alienation.

Evidently, therefore, training course content is not limited to a situation where a number of qualified teaching staff merely handle a given profession-related programme, but where the former is actually enriched by other components such as guidance and work placement shadowing. Indeed, GALDUS ensures that its staff are trained to shadow subscribers through a complete profession-linked process requiring an understanding of their cognitive abilities, as well as their sensitivities and affective, team and behavioural qualities. Trainers attempt to refine their approach to each person. This does not imply personalised courses - quite the opposite, as groups are seen as stimulating - rather, a) personalising parts of the curriculum and tailoring the final stage and b) maximising individual personalities, characteristics, abilities and desire for involvement. Class tutors, along with the ubiquitous guidance and shadowing, are the vectors of these specific tasks, eliciting the very best from those participating. Tutors, spectators in the classroom, are vested with observing how relationships evolve between course-members and trainers, concerning themselves with eliminating snags and identifying needs *vis-à-vis* personal and interpersonal situations, relationships with the teaching staff and course-member motivation.

Apart from helping to define useful career paths, guidance seeks to identify participants' interests, fears, expectations and reasons. In addition to providing job-seeking skills, shadowing seeks to demonstrate how mental approach, attitude towards work and other people, as well as knowledge regarding oneself, one's potential and one's uniqueness with respect to the world of work are equally important dynamics in the search for and retenttion of a given job.

At the end of the training programme outlined, every course-member is issued with a report summarising abilities, interests, motives, talents plus strengths and weaknesses in relation to a given employment area in its entirety (hence interpersonal, as well as technical, *skills*). Together with the trainers' input, this provides the course-member with a useful aid in the construction of a job strategy.

C Access

In the light of what has been said regarding the methodological approach adopted by GALDUS's trainers, the choice of promotional and advertising mechanisms is anything but traditional or formal. It is vital to the trainers to be able to use the kind of channels and vehicles which easily reach their potential subscribers. Such channels and vehicles are identified in accordance with a very real (non-prejudicial) understanding of how its target group lives and where it meets. The nature of the former thus varies according to both course-type and user-profile.

For the Sound Technicians' course, for instance, they decided on a concentrated round of leaflet drops in recording studios and at the most listened-to radio stations of the user-profile in question. For the Digital Photography course, meanwhile, not only art schools, but also places of recreation like gymnasia, libraries and cafés were leafleted. For the Telematics in Publishing course, on the other hand, aimed at former drug-addicts, SerT (The Drug Addicts' Service) and USSL (district clinics) were used.

Access, in itself, is very simple. The potential user telephones GALDUS to arrange a meeting with an supervisor who will organise an in-depth interview regarding the individual's reasons, expectations and experiences. Since GALDUS operates at a local level, the subscriber is unlikely to encounter transport problems in getting to the centre.

D Networks

GALDUS liaises with a large and diverse range of units (individuals, public bodies and institutions). There are, on the one hand, strong links with local training institutes, the Milan Education Office, a number of state-run senior schools, *Il Consorzio Scuole Lavoro* (of which GALDUS is a member), as well as with the research department into family and social malaise of one of Milan's leading universities (Università cattolica del Sacro cuore).

Ties with the world of work, on the other hand, have become steadily closer over the years; these include graphic art publishing companies and *Confcooperative* (a consortium of community co-operatives). Last, but not least, relationships with institutions deserve a mention: these include Lombardy Region and USSL (local clinics).

E Outcomes and Assessments

Just taking the parameter of work placements into account, GALDUS's results are most satisfactory. 60% of subscribers who attended company-based courses have gone on to find a reasonable job, albeit in some instances temporary jobs. Subscribers offer critiques of themselves before, during and after the programme/company placement. They are also assessed by the host companies. To this end, GALDUS keeps a computer record of participating companies who are also asked to report in writing regarding the experience shared. For the trainers, such reporting becomes an invaluable part of the process enabling the continuous correction and improvement of course content.

GALDUS's strong points are its physical position in the local community, the importance attached to the whole person and the ongoing monitoring and assessment of subscribers. Other similar training and guidance centres do not possess such systematic processes or highly-qualified trainers boasting, above and beyond their ability to impart theory, so many years' experience of social malaise. Of particular note is the standard of targeted marketing. The greater the social malaise and marginalisation, the greater the necessity for careful 'guidance' (not providence) to help the individual regain self-confidence and move away from complete isolation. The first condition for fulfilling such a premise is being seen to be accessible, a requisite typically shunned by the majority of Italian structures. This element is a most useful one, paving the way for continuous revision of approach, course structure etc.

The great strength of GALDUS is the way it shadows the individual, using appropriate methods, through each stage of the work placement process, not only during the training-orientation phase, but before its beginning (optimum targeted marketing), and for the duration of a post-course programme of placement shadowing. This professionally integrated and inter-linked person-centred process, involving a range of actors (trainers, tutors, supervisors and employers), is of the utmost relevance for society's under-qualified and underprivileged.

Case study no. 7

CeSIL - Centro Solidarietà Internazionale Lavoratori

CESIL - CENTRO SOLIDARIETÀ INTERNAZIONALE LAVORATORI

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Opening hours: Monday:, 09:00 - 12:00; Tuesday, 15:00 - 18:00; Wednesday:, 09:00 - 12:00; Thursday, 15:00 - 18:00

Contact persons: Luigia Alberdi, Celia Landaverdia

Foreign languages spoken: English, Spanish

Philosophy

"To render non-EU immigrants autonomous in the context of economic and social immigration thanks to the provision of appropriate operative and legal tools."

A History, context and general structure

In 1980 CeSIL - Centro Solidarietà Internazionale Lavoratori (International Solidarity Workers' Centre)- was founded as a non-profit organisation. Promoted by Cisl[13] (Italian Confederation of Workers' Unions) in Milan and by ACRA (Association of Rural Co-operation) in Africa, this body was created to solve the migratory problem that arose in the early eighties and was starting to become, in quantitative terms, a fairly widespread phenomenon in Italy[14].

The objective of the centre is to provide, particularly in the capital of Lombardy and its province, guidance and information services to non-EU immigrants in order to facilitate introduction and integration into the Italian economic and social fabric. In the 18 years of the association's life, the activities on offer have undergone profound modifications owing a) to the gradual changes in the Italian legal framework in the matter of immigration and b) to the transformation that has occurred in production and social reality.

CeSIL is almost entirely financed by Cisl with, in addition, a fairly small contribution from the sale of annual membership cards having a symbolic cost of Lire 10,000 (5 ECU), to users earning an income of over three million lire (1,500 ECU) per month, representing approximately 10% of overall users. Because membership is not compulsory, the better-off users are given the choice of making a small contribution towards services obtained from the centre itself.

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[13] The Cisl (Italian Confederation of Workers' Unions) is the trade union organization founded in 1950 following the splitting of the Christian-democratic current of the unitary Cgil in July 1948.

[14] According to official Home Office data in 1981 there were 312,437 foreigners. For further information see "Foreign immigration in Italy" (coordinated by Nino Sergi), Edizioni Lavoro, Rome, 1991.

Management and organisation of the centre is entrusted to two employees of the centre with assistance from 2-3 conscientious objectors. The one employee has a managerial and co-ordinating role while the other, in collaboration with the conscientious objectors, undertakes the management and supervision of consultations at the counter.

B Functions, target groups and content

The main activities carried out by CeSIL in collaboration with Anolf - Associazione Nazionale Oltre Le Frontiere (National Associations Beyond Boundaries) - are listening to, giving guidance to and orientating non-EU members in the matter of solving problems of a varying nature: residence permits, family reunions, work, minors, return to native lands and other miscellaneous matters.

1. Residence permits

The residence permits that, by law, each foreigner has to hold in order to stay and work in Italy, vary according to the reason for his/her stay: residence permit for work under an employment contract, for the self-employed, for study purposes, for family or health reasons or for religious reasons. The obtaining, renewal and updating of these residence permits, which have a limited validity, require the presentation of specific documentation about which CeSIL offers in-depth consultation.

2. Family reunion

The consultation provided in this field includes:

- filling out the official stamped form to be presented to the Questura (Police Headquarters);
- making sure that candidates have the necessary requisites and documents to be presented to the authorities in question.

3. Issues linked to the working world

This service consists in directing users towards specialised bodies and offices linked to the working world and job seeking:

- the employment office for registration in unemployment lists; the trade dispute office for problems regarding severance pay or wage differences;
- benefit advice centres for mobility and family allowances;
- CAF for the filling out of forms pertaining to income tax declaration. This service is available to domestic and autonomous workers.

4. Problems linked to minors

This service is concerned with assistance to minors in the following cases:

- regularisation of residence permits with the help of the Istitute Coesione Familiare;
- integration into Italian government schools with follow up both by operators at the centre and by social workers dealing specifically with minors.

5. Return to native lands

This service offers consultation to non-EU immigrants wishing to return home. Particular emphasis is placed on the following cases: .

- abandonment of non-EU children by fathers; .
- return of foreign citizens due to health reasons.

6. Miscellaneous

This category includes all types of general consultation provided by practitioners linked to the management of daily life such as, for example, an understanding of telephone or gas bills or explanations about the different ways of saving with banks or post offices.

Table 25 showing CeSIL activities provides a summary of the number of annual consulting services provided in the different contexts. This table shows that the most frequent services provided are those pertaining to residence permits and family reunion.

Table 25. Number of consulting services provided per year by CeSIL

Number of consulting services/per year	**1993**	**1994**	**1995**	**1996**	**1997**
Consulting	2300	2604	4107	4136	4368
Residence permits	1040	1367	1716	2511	2236
Family reunion	312	431	858	769	1367
Work permits	570	376	326	330	42
Miscellaneous	378	430	611	526	726

Source: CeSIL processing.

Users are offered consulting and guidance services employing two different approaches. The first consists of a personal interview with a practitioner lasting from 20 to 30 minutes. This is often conducted in the user's mother tongue. During this in-depth interview, the practitioner collects all the user's personal and professional data in a personal file which is then stored. This facilitates and improves any consultation that might subsequently be required. In the second approach, where simpler or more urgent cases are in question, the practitioners provide specific information and consultations over the telephone.

Some conclusions regarding quantitative and demographic characteristics of users. As shown in table 26, users have doubled over the last five years increasing from 2310 users per year in 1993 to 4368 in 1997. In particular, the number of female to male users has increased to a greater extent, tripling for females and doubling for males. With regard to age, the central group is between 30 and 50 years of age, although minors, young people of about 18 and people up to and over sixty year olds contact the centre. Finally, with regard to the nationality and the relative countries of origin most strongly represented in 1997, these were (see table 27) Peru and El Salvador followed by Sri Lanka, Morocco, Senegal, the Philippines, Brazil, Ecuador and Albania. Users from Peru and San Salvador represent 38.4% of overall usership.

Table 26. Number of users of CeCIL per year

Sex	**1993**	**1994**	**1995**	**1996**	**1997**
Women	735	862	1835	1831	2107
Men	1575	1742	2272	2305	2261
Total	**2310**	**2604**	**4107**	**4136**	**4368**

Source: CeSIL processing.

Table 27. CeSIL Users' Nationality - Year 1997

Nationality	Persons	Nationality	Persons	Nationality	Persons
Albania	90	Eritrea	42	Portugal	2
Algeria	46	Ethiopia	30	Portorico	1
Angola	1	Ex-Jugoslavia	23	Repubblica Ceca	2
Apolide	4	Philippine	178	Romania	33
Arabia Saudita	1	Gambia	1	Russia	5
Argentina	2	Ghana	19	Santo Domingo	3
Armenia	4	Jamaica	5	Senegal	394
Bangladesh	34	Japan	2	Serbia	3
Benin	1	Jordan	4	Seychelles	3
Bolivia	8	Guatemala	12	Syria	1
Bosnia	1	Guinea	7	Slovakia	1
Brazil	128	India	28	Somalia	54
Bulgaria	20	Indonesia	1	Spain	2
Burkina Faso	11	Iran	3	Sri Lanka	447
Cameroon	6	Italy	15	Sudan	4
Capoverde	25	Kenya	13	Switzerland	2
Chile	20	Lettonia	1	Tagikistan	1
China	30	Libya	5	Tailandia	1
Colombia	30	Madagascar	9	Tunisia	76
Korea	3	Mali	3	Turkey	25
Ivory Coast	30	Morocco	435	Ukraine	7
Croatia	7	Mauritius	3	Hungary	1
Cuba	15	Nigeria	23	Uruguay	4
Ecuador	108	Pakistan	18	Venezuela	4
Egypt	96	Peru	1030	Zaire	3
El Salvador	652	Poland	5	**Total**	**4378**

Source: CeSIL processing.

C Access

Immigrants learn about CeSIL through various channels. First and foremost, from Cisl (a trade-union) in Milan and from all its affiliates and, secondly, through all the institutions that collaborate with CeSIL in offering consulting services. These include the Questura, employment offices, municipalities, the Chamber of Commerce, the USSL - Local Health Units. And, finally, there is always word of mouth.

D Networks

CeSIL's network is extremely widespread. Its main practitioners are: the trade-union - Cisl; the local institutions and bodies mentioned above; and additionally all the other organisms and associations dealing with the issues upon which CeSIL focuses.

E Outcomes and assessment

The most important aspects of CeSIL are 1) the visibility it enjoys as a trade-union-financed organisation in the Milan area; and 2) the excellent professional profile of its female practitioners through their almost twenty years experience in the field. Furthermore, users on their first encounter with the organisation find very few linguistic or psychological barriers: the operational headquarters, though quiet and clean, are not luxurious, something that might cause those users, often living in semi-illegal or deplorable economic conditions, to feel ill-at-ease; and the woman in charge of the counter is herself a former immigrant from El Salvador who has been living in Italy for ten years. This greatly facilitates user communication, not only for Central and Latin American users able to communicate with the practitioner in their own language, but also because she is able to identify with the users because she herself has experienced the same problems in the past; and cultural barriers are thus reduced.

Case study no. 8

Fondazione San Carlo

FONDAZIONE SAN CARLO
Registered Office (temporary)
Piazza Fontana, 2, I - 20122 Milano
Operational Centre
Pensionato Belloni, Viale Fulvio Testi, 285
I - 20126 Milano
Tel. +39-02-644.791
Fax +39-02-644.79.530
Open: Monday – Friday, 09:00 - 18:00
Contact persons: Sandro Antoniazzi
Foreign languages spoken: English, French and Arabic

Philosophy

"The setting up, through integrated initiatives, of sustainable solutions to the special needs of the disadvantaged part of the labour force."

A History, Context and General Structure

Fondazione San Carlo, a non-profit organisation, was set up in July 1994 as part of the Caritas Ambrosiana programme. The latter was involved in providing solutions to the myriad of voluntary initiatives organised by church associations concerned with the ever more structurally complex needs of non-EU immigrants and disadvantaged job-seekers. Fondazione San Carlo's declared aims include the assisting and (re)integration of the following groups, both socially and in terms of employment: i) non-EU immigrants; ii) migrants from other regions of Italy and iii) Milanese residents with serious housing problems.

The Fondazione may be considered a 'secondary' (as opposed to 'primary') reception point for the immigrant and indigenous populations. In contrast to the former, the latter are organisations concerned with those newly arrived in Italy who are awaiting temporary residence permits and searching for work and accommodation. Meanwhile, individuals requesting assistance from Fondazione San Carlo already tend to have jobs, but do not feel they have adequate accommodation. Additionally, they make use of the Fondazione's job assistance programme to seek better and longer-term employment opportunities in Italy. Besides two ancillary areas, the two principal branches of activity concern the administration of accommodation (a hostel, bedsitters and small flats) as well as policy implementation in the field of employment assistance.

The Fondazione is financed both internally (by, for instance, the Diocese plus revenue derived from rented accommodation), as well as by various national and EU funds (European programmes, the ESF and regional/national funds allocated to immigrants and disadvantaged job-seekers). The Fondazione also receives a number of direct/indirect private financial contributions.

The Fondazione is efficiently structured and organised. Two people, with differing roles and tasks, are involved in its running. Naturally, as is often the case in tightly-run enterprises, their functions and responsibilities do overlap. The first individual - who has a basically supervisory role - deals, on the one hand, with general operational and financial matters and, on the other, with the implementation of all new employment policy initiatives. The second acts much more closely with the public, being involved in the running and co-ordination of practical assistance, particularly in the area of employment. *These two individuals are, in turn, supported by two others* who are engaged in reception and secretarial duties; one full-time, the other part-time. Finally, a person - usually of immigrant extraction to facilitate communication with residents - is employed as concierge in the Pensionato Belloni (see next paragraph).

B Functions, Target Groups and Content

The Fondazione's activities may be divided up into four broad sections: Accommodation, Work Reintegration Programmes, Cultural Recreation and Research.

1. Accommodation

Right from the outset, Fondazione San Carlo has run a Hostel (Pensionato Belloni) to help deal with problems associated with secondary reception. It contains 109 subsidised beds. Room-sharing costs 410,000 lire (200 ECU) per person per month (bathroom included), single rooms 530,000 lire (265 ECU). There is a communal kitchen which the residents themselves are responsible for. A major plus regarding the Belloni hostel is the fact that immigrant and local populations live under the same roof, thus encouraging integration and avoiding ghettoisation. Whilst the hostel cannot hope to provide long-term housing solutions, it does make a useful temporary contribution to the problem. Indeed, residents may even continue to live there after a year, as long as they are prepared to accept a rent increase. Moreover, in accordance with Regional Law no. 28/901[15], Fondazione San Carlo has obtained 16-year fixed leases on 30 council houses, bedsitters and flatlets. These premises are made available to any needy Italian or foreigner.

2. Employment

Fondazione San Carlo is considerably different from the other services previously highlighted insofar as it implements concrete employment reintegration programmes as opposed to providing only information, guidance and consultation services. The latter activities do fall within the Fondazione's ambit, but tend to be entrusted to third parties. The Fondazione is, therefore, a prominent vehicle in the area of employment reintegration initiatives. It functions by identifying the particular needs of the individual concerned and then implementing appropriate measures, using external structures where necessary. The following may be described as the most significant employment reintegration programmes during recent years (1994-1998):

- *Framework Agreement signed by Fondazione San Carlo, Fondazione Clerici, Cooperativa San Martino, Extra Centre association, the Milan City Council Office for Foreigners and the Employment Agency.* The rationale behind the agreement is to seek logistical solutions and implement useful training programmes embracing guidance, consultation, vocational courses and integration in the workplace.
- *Vocational Training Courses for Immigrants and the Unemployed.* Financed by the ESF and the Youthstart programme, these courses award a recognised qualification and are available in a number of localities in the Province of Milan (Lissone, Desio and Novate Milanese).

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[15] Under this law, Lombardy Region may bypass conventional means of council house designation on a number of grounds (agency, protection, calamity and social necessity).

- *Framework Agreement signed by Fondazione San Carlo, Cooperativa San Martino and the Milan Artisans' Association.* Two-year courses involving one year of training and another of work experience.
- *Scuole-Botteghe (School-shops).* This initiative encourages unemployed school-leavers to learn a trade in authentic shop/workshop environments.
- *World-Job.* This involves two IT courses (the first basic, the second more advanced) lasting a total of 4 months. Available to 30 individuals - typically immigrants - interested in catering and door/window fitting. Finance comes from the Provincial level, with a small contribution from Milan City Council.
- *Run-Down Areas Youth Enterprise Support Programme (in liaison with the Youth Enterprise Board, Milan Province, Sodalitas, the Young Businesspersons Association, the Chamber of Commerce and a number of Banks).*

  This initiative came about to encourage and support the creation of employment opportunities for the under-30's in run-down suburbs of the city. The programme may be divided into 3 stages:

  i The first stage involved a programme feasibility study with reference to a) young peoples' desire and interest to set up in business and b) existing infrastructure.

  ii Young people were then asked to present their own business ideas and plans. It was up to the Youth Enterprise Board to select the most promising ideas and turn them into reality.

  iii Finally, these worthwhile ideas were presented to banks involved in the initiative and financial assistance was agreed between the parties.

- *Financial Assistance to the Self-Employed.*

  i) Credit lines – Extrà - Imprese
  Banca Popolare di Milano has offered a wide range of banking services to students, as well as to non-EU workers (to help the latter become absorbed by the city). Such assistance is co-ordinated through the Milan Chamber of Commerce Industry, Craft and Agriculture, Fidicomet (Business and Tourism Credit Guarantee Fund), Fondazione San Carlo, the Foreigners Office of the Union CGIL, CISL-CESIL and the Foreigners Assistance Centre of the Union UIL. These offer a variety of assistance packages including the administration of savings as well as sending funds to home countries. Extra-Imprese, meanwhile, co-ordinates special interest-free loans (as much as 40 million lire – 20,000 ECU - , repayable monthly) for people wishing to set up their own business or take on one which is already in existence.

  ii) Ethical Accounts
  These have been set up in the following banks: Banca Popolare di Lecco, Deutsche Bank, Banca Briantea, Banca Popolare di Milano and Banca di Desio.

In addition to such practical assistance, information evenings are also organised for hostel residents who require further details about aspects of the help available. Expert speakers contribute to these evenings, which are generally held at the hostel. Subject-areas needing most clarification typically include: Immigrant Worker Rights and Italian Law; Worker Rights, Duties and Income Expectancy and Temporary Resident Permits. Psychological consultation is also available on request. These initiatives are not scheduled, but emerge as a result of specific resident needs.

3. Socio-Cultural Awareness and Integration Initiatives
In order to encourage exchange between locals and foreigners, the Fondazione occasionally organises exhibitions and cultural events. At the moment, this area remains largely underdeveloped, though in the future it is hoped to exploit its potential.

4. Research Activities
Any Fondazione San Carlo-commissioned piece of research into immigrant living/working conditions is usually entrusted to, and carried out by, external bodies. As regards the users themselves, they are generally equally distributed between both sexes, typically 35-50 years old and from a wide range of countries. There are especially significant numbers of Eritreans and Senegalese. Very often, they have secondary school qualifications, but are unable to find a position matching their aspirations. As a result, they frequently end up in unstable, poorly-paid employment. The better scenarios include being taken on as specialist labour by small provincial firms, accepting jobs in social work with few real responsibilities or prospects (care assistants), or working as dishwashers in the catering trade. This is why they come to Fondazione San Carlo - in the hope of finding jobs with better pay and prospects which will facilitate their integration into Italian society. Vocational training courses, on the other hand, are usually attended by young individuals (25/26 year-olds) without ties.

C Access
Resources that the Fondazione takes advantage of to publicise its activities include:

- A church-produced magazine in the form of a guide
- Caritas Ambrosiana
- The Milan City Council Foreigners Office
- Public and commercial bodies (previously mentioned), closely involved with the Fondazione
- Word-of-mouth

There are few language barriers amongst the hostel's residents since the concierge is usually an immigrant, too. As a secondary reception structure, many of the individuals who seek assistance already have a reasonable knowledge of Italian since they will already have had some experience of living with the local population. Certain difficulties do arise, however, typically concerning the immigrant's overall cultural attitude and work ethos. For their part, the immigrants themselves often encounter enormous workplace prejudice from employers.

D Networking
Fondazione San Carlo has a very large range of contacts. The closest relationships have been forged with Caritas, Milan City Council Foreigners Office, Milanese union bodies and primary reception, guidance and vocational training centres for immigrants.

E Outcomes and Assessment
Fondazione San Carlo's strong points are its ability to implement joint work/social policies and practical employment re-integration programmes in line with employer and subscribee needs. Rates of successful work placement are very high (80% amongst those who attend vocational courses). A second, and winning, factor is the large number of useful contacts the Fondazione has for its placement schemes. Thirdly, its hostel is clean and well-looked after. The main drawback lies in its not being able to provide enough post-scheme guidance and information once the individual has finally entered into working environment.

Case study no. 9

Extra Centre

EXTRA CENTRE
Piazza Aspromonte, 26
I - 20131 Milano
Tel./Fax +39-02-295.17.299
E-mail: mariam@iol.it
Opening hours: Monday – Friday, 09:00 - 13:00 and 14:00 - 18:00
Contact person: Mamadou Ndiaye
Foreign languages spoken: English, French, Arabic, Spanish, Portuguese, Croatian, Chinese.

Philosophy

"Consider the person as a whole and offer him/her useful, independent means in the search for work".

A History, Context and General Structure

In 1991, a group of Senegalese immigrants, dissatisfied with previous work experiences in Italy, attended a training course which was financed by the ESF and the Lombardy Region and organised by the Scuola di Psicologia dell'Organizzazione. From this stemmed the idea of forming an association capable of providing a reference point for the immigrant community in the difficult and, at times traumatic, process of finding accommodation and work.

The financing funds drawn upon by Extra Centre are: the ESF; specific funding from the European Commission's DG V of the European Commission, national Law no. 39/1990 (better known as the "Martelli" law), regional funding and provincial financing.

At present, the Extra Centre consists of 17 members, 5 of whom are on the Board of Directors (4 members and 1 chairman). The centre is organised and run by two members assisted by a series of professionals and consultants who contribute part-time with co-ordinated and on-going collaborative contracts.

B Functions, Target Groups and Content

Right from the beginning, the centre's approach was "holistic" in the sense that it attempted to provide complete solutions to the wide range of requirements and needs encountered by non-EU immigrants such as housing, job seeking and social/cultural integration. These needs are strictly connected and the solving of one of these problems is often linked to the others. Over the years, for reasons of efficiency and effectiveness, Extra Centre has concentrated on, and specialised in, the provision of active policies whilst continuing to pursue the following activities and objectives:

- Developing awareness of the various foreign cultures and mediation by means of organising cultural, artistic and social events in association with public bodies
- Research activities
- Translation of manuals and guides
- Participation in international co-operation projects

With regard to active labour policies, the activities and services offered are:

- ***Information, Guidance and Counselling***

A series of activities linked to guidance, information and consultancy regarding residence permits, job/house seeking, health problems and integration. The school of psycho-sociology provides the methodology used for guidance and consulting services. On the one hand this involves working on the individual's motivation and psychology and, on the other, on cognitive aspects in order to give both an accurate analysis of the individual's professional skills and abilities, as well as provide an in-depth knowledge of the labour market.

- ***Training***

Vocational training course;

Socialisation and integration into the world of employment/self-employment;

Italian language;

Job-seeking techniques;

Integration updating courses for teachers and social workers.

- ***Job Creation and Self-employment. Support to match labour supply with demand***

As regards matching labour supply with demand, this takes place by means of a broad network of small business links and the entry of user names and professional profiles into a computerised databank.

Although information courses about the world of work, counselling and vocational guidance activities are all free of charge and held both on an individual as well as collective level, they do not take gender into account. In fact, they are indiscriminately targeted to women and men without considering, or answering to, specific aspects inherent in gender difference.

The people who contact Extra Centre are mainly foreign men and women with a slight prevalence of the former over the latter although there is also a very small minority of Italians, as shown by table 28. The nationalities most strongly represented are Peruvians, Filipinos, Moroccans, Egyptians and Senegalese between the ages of 20 and 50, of whom almost half are aged between 30 and 39. According to Extra Centre data, its subscribers are divided up according to educational qualifications as follows: 15 per cent are illiterate; 23 per cent have secondary school diplomas, 10 per cent have a professional technical diploma; 36.9 per cent have a high school diploma and, finally, 14.2 per cent have undertaken an intensive degree course and/or have a university degree.

Table 28. Extra Centre users' country of origin, 1997

Country of origin	Total	Country of origin	Total
Albania	35	Ireland	2
Algeria	37	Iran	4
Angola	9	Iraq	1
Austria	8	Italy	45
Argentina	8	Lebanon	3
Bangladesh	40	Macedonia	1
Brazil	27	Madagascar	2
Bosnia	13	Morocco	103
Bulgaria	5	Mauritius	37
Burundi	10	Nepal	3
Burkina Faso	7	Nicaragua	11
Cameroon	3	Nigeria	26
Chile	1	Palestine	9
China	14	Pakistan	23
Colombia	2	Peru	143
Congo	26	Poland	11
Ivory Coast	33	Dominican Rep.	35
Korea	2	Romania	16
Croatia	17	Russia	8
Cuba	13	Ruanda	19
Egypt	94	Senegal	96
El Salvador	27	Seychelles	28
Ecuador	19	Sierra Leone	37
Eritrea	25	Spain	4
Ethiopia	18	Somalia	35
Philippine	127	Sri Lanka	45
France	3	Tanzania	31
Gambia	12	Togo	11
Germany	1	Tunisia	47
Ghana	25	Turkey	1
Jordan	29	Uganda	13
Djibouti	1	U.S.A.	3
Greece	1	Zaire	35
India	42	**Total**	**1619**

Source: Extra Centre databank association

C Access

Extra Centre uses numerous information and promotion channels:

- Specific trade and national press. The newspaper "How?" published and circulated by the immigrants themselves, deals entirely with problems encountered by immigrants during integration into the social and working world of Milan. Extra Centre users publish 50 job offers fortnightly. Furthermore, from time to time, articles about Extra Centre are published in leading Italian newspapers such as 'Sole 24 Ore' and 'Corriere della Sera'.
- Provincial labour offices;
- Word-of-mouth, which remains the most successful vehicle.

In order to use Extra Centre services it is necessary to fix an appointment with a practitioner by telephoning beforehand.

Once the first contact has been made, the individual's personal data, training and qualifications are entered into a databank which is updated every six months. Subscribers are allowed to use the computer to write their CVs and the telephone to contact companies. For all services pertaining to family care (e.g. childcare) and psychological problems, subscribers may avail themselves of specific bodies and associations that work in close collaboration with Extra Centre. There are no particular language barriers at Extra Centre because the operators belong to different nationalities and are at least bilingual.

D Networks

Extra Centre is not an integral part of an association network but is closely connected to the following institutions:

- The Milan Foreigners' Registration Office;
- The District Employment Division;
- The Regional Employment Agency;
- The Region;
- Vocational training schools (e.g. Fondazione Clerici School);
- Non-profit foundations and associations that deal with integration of non EU immigrants into the labour market, e.g. Fondazione San Carlo and Fondazione San Martino;
- Companies and trades-unions.

E Outcomes and Assessment

Since it is difficult to follow the progress of Extra Centre subscribers, little detailed research is available on how individuals fare in the real working environment. Indeed, the non-EU immigrant population does not remain in a fixed or precise place for long periods. It is often forced to move from one place to another because of housing problems, or from one Italian city to another offering work. The Extra Centre discovered that its services were no longer required by 20% of subscribers, 70% of individuals return 3-4 times a year, whilst 10% do not manage to become integrated into the world of work. The results, though, could be misleading. It is, in fact, to be doubted that 20% may be considered absorbed into the Italian labour market, due to the problems mentioned above. Furthermore, the assessment about 70% of users may be open to dual interpretation. This might indeed be thought of as a failing since realistic immigrant expectations regarding long-term employment are typically low. In most cases, the non-EU immigrant population is offered jobs requiring minimal qualifications, which often coincide with fixed-term work. Moreover, non-EU immigrants do not initially aim at stable integration within Italian society (which would possibly help them to obtain better jobs with enhanced prospects) but, rather, look towards finding a profitable job that allows them to send money back home, or even return there permanently.

The Centre's strong points lie in the social workers' excellent knowledge of the world of work and of companies' professional requirements.

Due to logistic and financial reasons its weakness is that the range of services offered is too limited compared to the varied and evident needs of the subscribers themselves.

Case study no. 10

Orientamento Lavoro

ORIENTAMENTO LAVORO
Piazza Aspromonte, 26
I - 20131 Milano
Tel. +39-02-294.00.100
Fax +39-02-294.00.100
Opening hours: Monday – Friday 09:00 - 18:00
Contact persons: Marina Cavallini, Laura Mazzolari
Foreign languages spoken: English and French

Philosophy

"The key words are: maximising previous experiences; keeping personal and professional resources together; improving work performance; knowing oneself and the context better; moving strategically within the labour market and planning/on-going self-projection."

A History, Context and General Structure

Orientamento Lavoro was created in 1986 in Milan and is active in the field of vocational guidance, focusing its training activities mainly on women.

Developed as the first *Retravailler* Centre in Italy, with a socio-psychological approach based upon Evelyne Sullerot's experiences in France, the methodology was adapted to labour problems linked to the Lombardy area and Italy. Whilst Sullerot altered certain aspects, some basic methodological aspects were however maintained:

- individual focus on the specific nature of being a woman
- the individual and contextual relationships
- the importance of targeted information during individual assessment and the relationship between process and local conditions
- the role of requalification in personal replanning
- the role of empathy-centred teaching in path-planning, both during and after the termination of the training course.

Orientamento Lavoro is a private, non-profit social association which is almost entirely financed by various public funds: regional, national, European (with community programmes - Adapt and Now - plus the ESF). Such revenue is increased through association fees and payment for some of the courses and services offered.

As regards the association's organisational structure, the board of directors, consisting of five people (1 chairman, 1 vice-chairman and three members) determines the theory and the methodology to be followed. It also institutes courses and services which are developed by professionals and experts in the relevant subjects (7- 1 0). This expertise is assisted by a full-time secretary. Both the professionals and the secretary work for Orientamento Lavoro on part-time and/or co-ordinated (or continuous) contracts and hold average/high educational qualifications.

B Functions, Target Groups and Content

The three basic elements according to the socio-psychological approach, which the guidance model is based upon, are the following:

1 encouraging the individual to become aware of her potential and abilities;

2 providing the individual with the appropriate means to understand the economic, social and professional context in which she operates;

3 developing the individual's abilities in terms of planning, adaptation and innovation.

This approach differs considerably from traditional models which basically see guidance as information about the labour market and the professional profiles being sought. The crucial factors which particularly characterise this way of conceiving Vocational Guidance are the following:

- guidance is a training path: the individual rediscovers her own resources, fine-tuning skills already acquired. Additionally, by improving her self-awareness, she questions and actively compares and criticises herself in relation to the outside world. In this way, an attempt is made to change mental attitudes, thus encouraging a better understanding of one's own values as well as developing one's own abilities for application in professional spheres.
- focusing on the person, an active element in classroom work; focusing on an analysis of the outside context as a series of mechanisms, rules, places and reference people, as an intertwining of training sources, possibilities, sectors and profiles. The person may then learn to know and decode in an exploratory way in order to identify the gap between her own potential and outside reality.
- implementation of independent planning which considers experience gained, restraints, energy and motivation as essential contributory factors in a new plan of action, drawn up according to priorities and gradual implementation times.

Thanks to the combination of the above mentioned elements, the individual acquires faith and decision-making autonomy, thus allowing him/her to enter/re-enter the world of work with a capacity to re-appraise the plan over time. It is important to note that Orientamento Lavoro does not provide 'service packages' or 'standard courses' but rather services whose contents evolve over time in order to match, as far as possible, users' needs with changes that have taken place in the labour market. Moreover, courses may be developed *ad hoc*, according to specific user requests.

Guidance and counselling assistance offered essentially include the following services and courses:

- Interview techniques
- Educational and work guidance
- Job training guidance (the transition from job to job and planning reinforcement of planning for those at risk of unemployment)
- Work conversion module (identifying the reasons for change and redefining professional choices)
- Training course guidance
- Skill Evaluation (developing a training and/or professional programmes)
- Job-seeking techniques
- Training of male and female tutors
- Programming support

- Business motivation
- Documentation workshops.

Once subscribers have followed the courses they are no longer allowed to use either the computer or telephone to write CVs or contact companies. In some cases courses are free when financed by public funds (there may be an additional 'symbolic' charge; for example 1,000 lire/hour (0.50 ECU). Otherwise subscribers have to pay fees.

Orientamento Lavoro tends to be contacted by the following people:

- adult women returning to the labour market after having left for family reasons;
- young and adult women who have been made redundant or are undergoing requalification;
- women who have been made redundant or who are undergoing mobility;
- young women whom, after precarious work experience, wish to protect their professional future;
- young women who have recently obtained a diploma or who have graduated from university;
- ex-detainees who wish to become reintegrated into the world of work;
- female students

The main user age group is 31-45 years.

C Access

In most cases individuals learn about Orientamento Lavoro from advertisements in large-circulation daily newspapers whose supplements deal with the labour market (such as that published by 'Corriere della Sera') and in well-known women's magazines. The association may only be approached by means of an initial telephone call made during normal office hours (Orientamento Lavoro does not offer a counter service). Once an appointment has been fixed with a consultant for a first free appointment of an informative nature, the individual then decides whether to arrange a second appointment. At this appointment the aim is to fill out a card with the individual's personal and professional details. During this interview she is given advice about which guidance, counselling or training courses to follow. For this service the individual may expect to be charged a small fee of 50,000 lire (25 ECU). In rarer cases, specially selected job-seekers are directly sent to Orientamento Lavoro by the District Employment Division.

D Networking

Orientamento Lavoro is a founding member of CORA (Centri Orientamento Retravailler Associati): an association embracing 28 private and public centres which are recognised within the same conceptual and methodological guidance framework as viable training programmes. CORA, in turn, is a member of the EWA (Europe Work Action) association, with which the Retravailler centres active in Europe (Belgium, France, Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain and Switzerland) are also associated. Orientamento Lavoro is also part of:

> DIEFFE: Women and training, a Milanese association comprising agencies involved in the field of research, guidance, training and other opportunities.
>
> EUDIFF Italia, an association dealing with the creation of an information network for women's associations.

ESOPO, a network of male and female experts involved in the organisational development of equal opportunities.

In addition, common programmes have been set up with the following bodies and institutions: Ministry of Labour; Regions, Provinces and Communes; Equal Opportunity Committees; employers' agencies; vocational training centres; guidance centres and schools.

E Outcomes and Assessment

The association's strong points lie in the methodological approach used, in the particular courtesy and professionalism of all members and assistants and, finally, in the welcoming and highly positive atmosphere. The lack of systematic analysis and assessment regarding the effectiveness of services offered is understandable given Orientamento Lavoro's primary objective: to encourage a change in the individual's psychological and mental attitude, a necessary condition for re-entering the labour market.

Interview no. 1

Categories risking social exclusion: A woman over the age of thirty returning to the labour market after a ten-year absence.
Name, age and nationality Antonella Vitali, 41, Italian
Civil Status: Separated
Qualifications: Diploma as technical business expert with a foreign correspondent specialisation
Resident in: Arese
Languages: English

"After obtaining a diploma as a technical business expert, I worked in the foreign exchange department of a bank for 10 years. In the meantime, I got married and had a daughter, who is now twelve years old. Due to my daughter's health problems, I resigned from the bank so that I could be near her. During those years, while my husband pursued a brilliant career, I discovered my real passion: painting. I began to attend various art and decoration courses and subsequently, 'Fine Arts'. A year ago, my husband and I separated and with this separation came the need to return to work after a ten-year absence, preferably as an artist and not as a bank clerk... So, after reading an article in a woman's magazine on Orientamento Lavoro, I contacted this organisation immediately to get more specific information on the labour market. I attended a 100-hour course for adult women between the ages of 30-50. What did Orientamento Lavoro give me? First and foremost, faith in myself, in my abilities - it improved my self-esteem. In the second place, thanks to the tests that we had to undergo, I discovered skills I did not know I possessed: persuasion, patience, the desire to communicate. Furthermore, I realised that I did not possess the skills that a female entrepreneur ought to possess. This was really quite important since I had often considered setting up my own business to sell my compositions, i.e. to pursue a personal project with tenacity. At the end of the course, I devised my own professional project: to teach what I believed in - a private art course held in my home studio. Twelve people are currently enrolled in the course."

Interview no. 2

Category risking social exclusion:	A woman over the age of thirty returning to the labour market after a ten-year absence
Name, age and nationality	Ida Pacimeo, 39, Italian
Civil Status:	Married
Qualifications:	Diploma as technical business expert with a foreign correspondent specialisation
Resident in:	Milan
Languages:	French and scholastic English

"I learnt about Orientamento Lavoro through an ad in 'Corriere della Sera' (an Italian newspaper). I contacted them and then decided to attend a training course for adult women between the ages of 30-50. I have only been in Milan for four years. I am married with two daughters aged 11 and 16. Before coming to Milan, we lived in Sardegna, where my husband was born. My ten-plus years of work experience included administrative management, initially as a white-collar worker and then for another company as an autonomous worker. When I lived in Sardegna it was very difficult to work due to a lack of childcare structures such as crèches, etc. meaning that I stopped working while the girls were small. It was very difficult to start looking for work again in Milan because I didn't know the working environment, I don't know English well and because I was over thirty and married with two daughters. Before I came to Orientamento Lavoro, I sent a number of CVs to different companies without much success. I managed to organise a few interviews but sensed an enormous amount of "hostility" on the employers' part. I presume this was due to my age. What did Orientamento Lavoro give me? It gave me, like most of the other women who had arrived there depressed, faith in myself": it provided me with the confidence to enable me to move within the labour market and discover skills I didn't know I had. Indeed, at the end of the course I formulated a work plan: to open a catering business. Two months after the end of the course I found a part-time secretarial job at a recruitment company. I am pleased with these initial results but still desire to launch my business idea which I am determined to try and achieve ..."

Case study no. 11

DonnaLavoraDonna

DONNALAVORODONNA

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Provincial headquarters: Abbiategrasso Commune and at Goito at "Centro Parco delle Bertone"

Unemployment Offices: in the Communes of Rozzano, Binasco, Garbagnate, Lecco and Vigevano

Foreign language spoken: English

Philosophy

"Educating about choice-making - enabling individuals to confront the labour market independently."

A History, Context and General Structure

DonnaLavoroDonna is a non-profit organisation whose social objective is to promote and give due respect to women's work through the planning and organisation of research initiatives, guidance, positive action, training and professional development.

The centre was founded in 1982 by a group of women represented by the Milanese headquarters of the women's organisation "Unione Donne Italiane". From the late 1970s, the principle policy of this organisation was not only one of representation but, above all, the institution of specific centres to accomplish broad spectrum direct initiatives in support of women, including action regarding job problems. Hence the idea of founding an association dealing mainly with improving women's conditions in the labour market which, in the middle of the Eighties, was still strongly discriminatory. The strategy chosen by DonnaLavoroDonna, formally constituted in 1985, was vocational training which enabled women to qualify or requalify professionally. Indeed, greater professionalism would have increased women's competitiveness and their potential to access employment opportunities. The most representative category at that time were under-employed women over the age of forty, or those returning to the labour market after a prolonged absence due to childcare, driven by a need for socialisation. From the beginning, the vast range of training paths were not generalised but, rather, focused on the specific needs of women: requalification and re-evaluation of old jobs, new professional profiles, self-employment and support of entrepreneurship. Alongside these main activities, the statute also foresaw an initiative for research and analysis which, however, remained residual to the projects implemented or being implemented.

After a few years, in particular starting from the early Nineties, a change was noted both in the age and in user typology; these were in addition to an enlargement of the social objectives that saw the implementation of programmes not only targeted to women, but also to men. This meant that the self-assistance models initially applied to weaker groups might also have proved successful for other user-types. Indirectly, this meant recognition by the outside environment. At the same time, the nature of the initiatives offered changed. This was due to two factors: firstly, considerations that had emerged within the European context regarding the effectiveness of the initiatives themselves following the serious economic and employment crisis of the early Nineties; secondly, the considerable changes that had taken place in Italy with regard to labour market regulation. This allowed for the definition of a new assistance model whose key element was to support and integrate vocational training paths with other instruments ranging from welcome, support, pre-training, individual and collective guidance and consulting. These active labour policy measures were implemented at a decentralised level in municipal Employment Divisions. During 1996 and 1997, thanks to an agreement signed between DonnaLavoroDonna and the Communes, this resulted in the creation of Unemployment Offices in Rozzano, Binasco, Garbagnate and Lecco, the public financing for which was assured by art. 6 of Regional Law no. 9/1991. DonnaLavoroDonna was responsible for the running of these branches.

From a legal point of view, DonnaLavoroDonna is a non-profit organisation principally financed by regional, national and European public funds. In particular, the institutions that finance the assistance programmes are the ESF, the NOW and LEONARDO da VINCI community programmes, as well as transnational collaboration programmes such as Regione Lombardia - Regional Plan for Vocational Training, Regional Law no. 9/1991, Chapter 908 initiatives to assist individuals undergoing mobility, subject to wage-guarantee funds and the long-term unemployed and, finally, EEC/Ministry of Labour Law no. 125/91 ("Positive Action for the Promotion of Female Employment"). In the majority of cases, vocational training courses are free of charge with the exception of an association fee. The same applies to the other services provided by the Job Agencies.

From an operational point of view, there is a general management service within the association which is responsible for both administrative as well as organisational aspects and is run by 14-15 people whose job it is to co-ordinate different activities. Relationships with users, meanwhile, are handled by one person. With regard to training course staff, DonnaLavoroDonna avails itself of more than ten freelancers, all professionals in the field.

B Functions, Target Groups and Content

The services and activities provided can be divided into the following three areas:

1) vocational training, targeted at obtaining professional qualifications in specific areas: the environment, manufacture of handicrafts linked to interior decoration and restoration, tourism, agriculture and training for female operators in the labour market.

2) trans-regional development projects. In this case, vocational training activities are included in wider development projects, co-operating closely with local administrations;

3) active labour policies implemented at a decentralised level in collaboration with local bodies. Despite each Unemployment Office having specific areas of focus, active labour policy assistance models are divided thus:

- individual guidance;
- collective guidance;
- training support in order to help with the drafting of CVs and other transversal skills such as information technology or English courses;
- professional development projects backed up by ongoing support;
- insertion of the user's CV into a databank;
- preselection
- placement in companies at different levels (apprenticeships, in-house training periods, hiring);
- promotion of self-entrepreneurship and social co-operation.

It may be noted that the main objective of the Unemployment Office is to develop independence in the person searching for work and to construct his/her professional strategy. Merely entering the person's details into a databank would lead to a passive attitude on the part of the user.

There is a strong link between the main headquarters of DonnaLavoroDonna and the decentralised Unemployment Offices both with regard to assistance projects as well as for the user. Starting from next autumn, plans have been made to direct a number of active labour policies from the headquarters; such measures are presently co-ordinated informally in the form of individual and collective guidance courses.

The following activities will be added to those listed above:

- promotion of study and research;
- production and collection of documentation, as well as explanatory, educational and training material;
- promotion of seminars, conferences and meetings;
- publishing activities.

Users include both men and women. The women who contact the centre today are, on the one hand, very young with qualification needs and, on the other, older women in emergency situations (unemployed, long-term unemployed, undergoing mobility, wage-guarantee fund recipients) who require rapid and efficient re-integration into the labour market. The median age-group is between 25-35 years. Men represent only 20% of users and they are generally young and in search of their first job.

C Access

Users hear about the centre through various channels, generally fairly traditional ones. In the first place, thanks to the publication of courses in leading Italian newspapers, with a preference for advertising in "Corriere Lavoro", ("Corriere della Sera" supplement) and in specialised trade magazines. Secondly, by means of large public structures dealing with professional guidance such as CITE [16] - Centres for Technical Educational Innovation - and other private social bodies. Thirdly, thanks to the main women's associations. Finally, the famous "word of mouth" is always valid. Unlike their training courses, the offices operate no selection policy as regards access to the opportunities they offer.

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[16] In Lombardy, guidance management answers to the Region and is conducted by means of decentralized structures: the CITE (Centres for Technical Educational Innovation) on a provincial level and the USL – Local Health Units - connected to university centres (for university guidance).

D Networking

The largest connection network implemented by DonnaLavoroDonna is with local institutions and local governments thanks to the constitution of front offices and indirectly by means of the latter, with the social partners. There are, furthermore, excellent links with the main women's associations and with other vocational training centres.

E Outcomes and Assessment

Periodically assessments are made. With regard to the Unemployment Offices these are quantitative assessments such as, for example, how many male/female workers have been placed, what kind of work opportunities they have had, with what type of contracts etc. For vocational training activities, meanwhile, both employment assessments as well as assessments on the content of same are implemented. These are based on questionnaires distributed to users at the end of the training course. DonnaLavoroDonna's strong points are that all activities are based on the centrality of the individual's needs and that the combination of its number of different approaches represents an important added value for the user in terms of job placement. On the other hand, its major weak point and the difficulty most frequently encountered by the centre is the change in labour culture and its consequences which are not usually recognised by the user. This makes guidance and the counselling of training paths somewhat problematic. Indeed, choices that might seem effective and efficient in the eyes of the practitioner are not seen in the same way by the user, who is often a child of a "traditional" labour culture in the Fordist sense.

Case Study no. 12

CGIL - NIDIL - Nuove Identità Di Lavoro

CGIL - NIDIL - NUOVE IDENTITÀ DI LAVORO

c/o Camera Confederale del Lavoro di Milano e Provincia

Corso di Porta Vittoria, 43

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Opening times of the front office:

- counselling for employees or temporary workers, Monday, 14:30 – 17:30
- counselling for self-employed workers: Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday, 17:00 – 19:30

Contact persons: Maurizio Zanetti, Giulio Giovannini, Chiara Borro

Foreign languages spoken: English and French

Philosophy

"Workplace flexibility need not mean the loss of rights, safeguards and guarantees gradually won through long and bloody battles since the time of the first workers' societies. Instead, it should be a way of recognising the dignity and professionalism of workers within new working frameworks."

A History, Context and General Structure

The Cgil-NIdiL - Nuove Identità di Lavoro (New Working Identities) federation, part of Cgil[17] (Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro), came into being in May 1998. Cgil-NIdiL represents employees and self-employed on 'atypical' contracts, as they continue to be defined in official statistics, i.e. workers employed on a casual, part-time, temporary or fixed-term basis, persons supplying maintenance and co-ordinating services, co-operative associated workers and self-employed consultants who are subject to advance withholding tax or individual VAT registration number.

Cgil-NIdiL is the result of an evolution within Pegaso-CCA. CCA was an association formed in June 1995 by a group of self-employed workers who sought to give themselves an autonomous profile in the debates over a 10% statutory welfare contribution. A first significant result was achieved in 1996 when an independent tax rate was agreed for the self-employed, who had been removed from the traders' category (the members of which had to pay a contribution of 15%). In the intervening period CCA had begun to be divided by an internal fault-line. On one side there were those who wished to carry on with the existing battle as a means of ultimately obtaining an appropriate legal solution and the setting up of a professional register for the consultants' category. On the other side, there were others who had grasped the magnitude of the changes at hand, who could see that other professional figures - not merely consultants - were emerging. In the end, the second school of thought, bolstered by its more politically-oriented leanings, prevailed.

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[17] The trades union Cgil came into being in 1944 as a result of the convergence of the three major social forces: communism, socialism and Catholicism. Following the 1948 scission which led to the separate formation of the Christian democrat-inspired Cisl (Confederazione Italiana Sindacati dei Lavoratori) and the social democrat/republican inspired Uil (Unione Italiana del Lavoro) unions, the predominant elements remaining in Cgil were (particularly) communist, as well as socialist plus a number from the 'New Left'. The confederated Cgil, Cisl and Uil today constitute Italy's most important fount of union strength. Trade unions here, as in most other European countries, can be traced beck to the mid-19th Century, when the first workers' circles and cooperatives were formed.

This latter school of thought then developed ties with the trades unions, particularly Cgil and, in 1997, contacts led to the signing of a convention between the latter and the renamed Pegaso-CCA. The convention envisaged the joint representation of the interests of the self-employed in matters political and provided for financial and logistical support for Pegaso-CCA and its two nation-wide centres. Initial dissent among Cgil ranks made the transfer and effecting of the national agreement between the union's secretariats and the association's executive difficult. Apart from membership problems, the Milanese branch of the union would not, at first, countenance the constitution of the Pegaso-CCA association since, instead of considering these emerging professional figures as an entity in their own right, they preferred to place them in the same category as other subordinate workers. After a year which saw fervent activity on behalf of Pegaso-CCA, and the overcoming of internal union dissent, a groundswell of opinion grew within Cgil in favour of forming a new national federated union to represent the new working categories that had emerged in the post-Fordist era: workers of new manufacturing and workplace structures who, really, ought no longer be considered 'atypical', but, rather, 'typical'.

This is borne out in numerical analysis of the phenomenon. These were the circumstances that led to the formal dissolution of the Pegaso-CAA association and the subsequent formation of Cgil-NIdiL in offices at Milan's Camera Confederale del Lavoro.

B Functions, Target Groups and Content

Cgil-NIdiL, just like its predecessor Pegaso-CCA, has three main objectives. Firstly, to create a representative profile for new professional figures. Secondly to define the mechanisms (contractual, legal and active policy measures such as guidance and on-going training) necessary to safeguard their interests. The revised trades-union's campaign platform for obtaining a level playing-field in the workplace are the following:

a rewriting the workers' statute in the form of a *jobs statute;*

b defining rights and safeguards with regard to welfare and social security;

c seeking specific binding rules to safeguard workers against contractors;

d overseeing vocational training for the self-employed.

The following may be described as the platforms' principal objectives.

- defining an appropriate 10% social security regulation;
- promoting complementary open funds designed for the integrative welfare of consultants, freelancers and the non-regular self-employed, to be run by those involved according to their employment categories;
- establishing a general contractual and legislative regulation for the conferring of juridical recognition upon co-ordinated collaborations, identifying the distinguishing aspects of such relationships, defining the exact nature of the

casual agreement and any available contractual safeguards as well as appraising central elements in dependent workplace relationships;

- determining common reference points in the definition of diverse para-subordinate work contracts in various industrial sectors;
- preparing appropriate instruments to aid para-subordinate worker associate organisations, with the aim of setting up a confederally-organised system of representation;
- assisting the emergence of precarious and non-protected jobs, contributing to the determining of adequate checks and safeguards;
- determining appropriate reference models for tax, insurance and health discipline suitable to the range of sectors and activities;
- defining rules and juridical, legislative and contractual principles for access to, and the running of, non-regulated professional activities;
- assisting in the shaping and determining of reference-points for those who work in para-subordinate or self-employed roles-, aiming towards creating a permanent training framework to act as an important instrument to help such individuals remain in the workplace.

Finally, Cgil-NIdiL determines to provide a legal, fiscal and contractual counselling and assistance service, open to the public for a limited daily period, a few days per week. Present subscribers to Cgil-NIdiL amount to 130. Unfortunately, sufficiently conclusive details regarding subscribers are not yet available.

As part of the agreement with Cgil, members may benefit from a wide range of services, including those of affiliated professional studios and other associations. Membership permits direct participation at NIdiL-organised conferences. meetings and seminars. Such participation may take the form of verbal contributions and suggestions regarding the movement's general direction.

For obvious political and economic reasons, the Federation's two principal offices are located in the country's two major cities, Milan and Rome. In support of enlarging the network already established by Pegaso-CCA, further centres are anticipated in other main provincial capitals.

C Access

Access to the Cgil-NIdiL organisation is facilitated by its highly visible and efficient public profile. The birth of Cgil-NIdiL was covered by all the widest-circulation Italian dailies: Corriere della Sera, La Repubblica and Sole 24 Ore dedicated substantial articles to the matter. At the time of its formation, Pegaso-CCA received widespread local and national coverage, too. Indeed, during the course of the last year, Corriere, Sole 24 Ore and Repubblica (with its supplements), Il Manifesto, Linus and Avvenimenti have all written a series of different articles. There have also been numerous brief mentions and reports on TV and radio news programmes.

D Networking

Cgil-NIdiL is both directly and indirectly an integral part of a very dense and extensive network comprising not only federated category Cgil offices, but also those belonging to the confederated trades union.

The union is, moreover, in close contact with those bodies and institutions connected to the job marketplace, the education system, vocational training as well as to employers associations.

E Outcomes and Assessment

At this time it would really be quite premature to try and draw useful conclusions on Cgil-NIdiL's functioning (given its recent inauguration). All the same, a number of remarks and observations may be made. The emergence of Pegaso-CCA and its subsequent evolution into a new trades union federation may be considered extremely important, both politically as well as in terms of the union movement. Such importance derives from the fact that it emerged as a 'grass-roots' movement, a necessity given the widespread malcontent present amongst the 'grey' masses of workers often forced to work in precarious jobs, where exploitation tests all limits of legality. Such individuals demand protection and social representation. The trades union movement has, furthermore, demonstrated a clear ability to comprehend and respond concretely and opportunely to the socio-economic transformation at hand. Criticisms of the structure, meanwhile, lie in the partial and fragmentary nature of assistance provided, be the individual a member or not.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GUIDANCE SERVICES AND POLICYMAKERS

The objective of this last section is to present a series of recommendations regarding guidance, targeted to adult groups risking exclusion from the labour market. These are useful both from a conceptual and operative point of view for practitioners and policy makers.

These recommendations, which will focus on problems linked to accessing organisations that provide employment services and, in particular, vocational guidance, stem, on the one hand, from discussions with experts in the fields of active labour policies and social exclusion and, on the other, from spokespersons for social partners and qualified practitioners according to considerations triggered by a critical analysis of the case studies presented in the previous chapter as well as from in-depth reading on the issue of guidance (see bibliography).

Recommendations for guidance services

The content of the next few pages will focus on the key elements of an effective and efficient qualitative guidance model in terms of re-integration into the labour market. Without entering into a debate on the different schools of thought regarding the guidance service objectives included in employment services, the authors will side with those who maintain that the prime objective of guidance is not only the restoration of autonomy and faith in the individual but also the provision of instruments that, in view of the final objective - re-integration into the labour market - will enable him/her to operate within it. It is important for practitioners to bear this last objective in mind, otherwise they might run the risk of defeating all previous efforts, resulting in a considerable waste of economic resources.

With reference to the above, this can be said to be a broad concept of guidance that is not just a mere means of information about job opportunities but is also, above all, a training path to promote personal and professional growth that will maximise a person's potential and past experiences. In fact, both should be inherent in a process of integration/re-integration into the labour market. Starting from this premise the key elements of the model will be outlined.

A first element is linked to **territorial rooting** and **selection by users** of the body providing guidance services. By this we mean reference to a specific employment profile and area. In fact, the better the economic and social context are understood by the practitioner, the more precise the information s/he can give to users in terms of job opportunities and the more precise the planning of job integration paths. At this point it is necessary to provide exact clarification. By practitioner, in this case, we mean both the guidance counsellor and the planner. In some cases, these can be one and the same person although a division of tasks is preferable. In the event of there being a separation of roles and functions there must be strict collaboration between the two in order to increase service efficiency.

As far as the user is concerned, it is important that the service provider clearly defines the service target and recruitment criteria. Furthermore, to guarantee guidance effectiveness, the practitioners must define **quantifiable and realistic objectives vis-à-vis their own users.** In fact, only if both these conditions hold true is it possible, in retrospect, to make assessments regarding service efficiency, as useful to the practitioners as to the policy makers. It is only possible, over time, to improve employment services in terms of content and efficiency, vis-à-vis resource allocation, if quantitative/qualitative assessments are carried out. As confirmed by case studies, assessment, as an integral part of the duties conducted by practitioners, is often lacking in Italian organisations.

A third element concerns **user centrality as a vector of multiple needs**. First and foremost, this means that users cannot be grouped into homogenous user categories such as, for example, "the unemployed", "women" and so on, but must be dealt with as individuals, each with different problems. The user should not be considered only as a vector of specific but also of more widespread requirements and needs. Although this consideration is valid in a general sense it applies even more strongly to the adult population. In fact, the prime objective of those applying to a guidance service is to acquire the tools that will enable them to operate autonomously within the labour market and re-qualify professionally. However, these needs are accompanied by a whole series of different problems and constraints such as, for example, those linked to the organisation of family life, to accommodation, psychological support etc. If the whole range of these requirements is not met, the success of the guidance path is in question. Just take, the example of a woman of over thirty with children to support, without any family support who wishes, after a ten-year absence, to return to the labour market. This does not mean that the employment centres should answer or take upon themselves all these questions, but that they should avail themselves of other suitable structures and organisations. This consideration leads to the fourth strategic element: **network contact with different social, economic and institutional actors**. In other words there should be strict contact and communication between the different systems: enterprise system, vocational training system, family system, social partners. Since it is not possible to here discuss this issue in greater detail because it would detract from its main object, we invite those who are interested to read the survey "Eurocounsel" mentioned in the bibliography.

We will now carefully examine the crucial factors connected to the fifth strategic element relative to access - in the broad sense of the word. In fact, to guarantee **access** by adult groups of the labour market to employment and guidance services it is not sufficient to guarantee access to the physical structure of an organisation but it is also necessary to guarantee permanence, and lastly, to guarantee access to real labour market integration. Therefore, in order to make this analysis clearer, the following four phases linked to access are conceptually distinguished: promotion, welcoming reception, completion and, finally, follow-up.

1 As far as the first phase is concerned, it is necessary to underline, in successive stages, how in Italy real ***social marketing*** - of the kind availing itself of a wide gamut of forms of communication that change according to the user one wishes to reach - is almost non-existent. That which currently prevails is a promotional activity by the provider who uses extremely traditional channels (such as newspaper ads) that rarely manage to reach the weaker groups of the labour market. Added to this, there is the use of a bureaucratic language full of legalese and Latin terms, often incomprehensible especially to those with lower educational qualifications who are also those in greatest need of employment services. The notices of competitive examinations published in the Official Gazette are an example of this. It is useful to remember how this problem, that, in the end, is one of a democratic process, was the subject of an in-depth debate. This resulted in a partial response with a publication by a noted jurist of a manual[18] whose objective was to delineate a series of codes for the simplification of public administration language in order to render it comprehensible. This serious deficiency and inefficiency in the quantitative and qualitative level of promotional activity can be overcome if, and only if, those in charge

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[18] Sabino Cassese, *Codice di Stile. Manuale delle comunicazioni scritte ad uso delle amministrazioni pubbliche (Manual of written communications for use by public administration),* Istituto Poligrafico e Zecca dello Stato, 1993.

(practitioners but also policy makers) are prepared to change their methodological approach by actually putting themselves in the place of the user and not seeing him/her as an abstraction that generally coincides with that of an active person well informed about labour market management and possessed of good self-esteem. This also presupposes an analysis regarding the causes and effects of exclusion from the labour or social market. To return, therefore, to our example of a woman of over thirty with children to support, a flyer distributed in nursery schools would be much more effective than a high-sounding advertisement in a newspaper that may not be bought. In other words, this means asking simple questions about one's own user target such as, for example, where he/she lives, spends his/her day, what his/her activities are, what he/she reads, what radio station he/she listens to.

2 A second phase linked to access is that relative to ***reception***. Above all, the organisation must be located in a place that is easy for the user to reach. In the second place, it is important that the organisation, in addition to being welcoming, does not have architectural barriers preventing access to the disabled. Most of the organisations described in the last chapter do not comply with the above conditions. In the third place, it is of crucial importance that the practitioner interviewing the user for the first time has specific skills and a suitable high professional qualification. Not only must the practitioner be able to identify with the user but he must also be able to interpret his/her explicit and implicit needs[19]. The function of the person at the front desk is not, as is presently the case in Italy, merely to provide information *tout court*, perhaps handled in a bureaucratic and hurried way, but to know how to listen carefully to the users' specific needs. This means that the practitioner must have specific skills: excellent relational abilities, an ability to interpret and decipher different behaviours and languages not only in linguistic terms but linked, above all, to the condition of the unemployed or marginalised person, to know and decipher so-called "outsider culture" as well as those factors linked to gender. It is important to bear in mind that success of the entire guidance path may hinge on this first contact.

3 The third factor linked to access is the one relative to conditions ensuring ***completion*** in the organisation itself. In fact, once the user has managed to reach the structure and follow a certain type of guidance and training path, it is necessary to be certain that he/she manages to finish it. An aspect that is often underestimated in these cases is that the adult especially has a whole series of constraints (family, economic, mobility) that prevent or make participation in guidance courses difficult. This attitude derives partly from a lack of integration between labour policies, industrial policies and social policies and partly from extremely low (if not totally non-existent) unemployment benefits, safeguarding those already integrated into the regular labour market (particularly in industry and public employment) but leaving other workers or the unemployed completely unprotected. This expenditure, with that of Luxembourg, is one of the lowest in Europe (see tables below). It is necessary to underline that in Italy, unlike in other European countries, there is no minimum guaranteed national income scheme (except on an experimental level) for those without means. This often means that the unemployed person has to rely on the resources of his/her own family or family of origin causing further unease of a psychological nature. Thus, to

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[19] See the interesting article by Sergio Bevilacqua and Lella Brambilla, *Ruolo e bisogni degli operatori della Formazione profesionale impegnati nei corsi rivolti agli adulti non occupati (Role and requirements of vocational training practitioners engaged in courses targeted to unemployed adults),* in Professionalità 44, March-April, 1998.

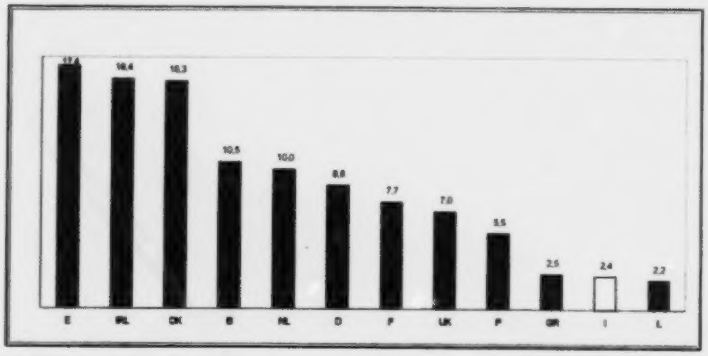
improve completion rates (in addition to what will be said further on to policy makers) it is necessary that the provider of employment services converses and has contact with different economic actors and social structures (for example, crèches for child-care).

Table 29. Current expenditure for social protection divided up by function, 1994 (% of overall expenditure)

Functions:	B	DK	D	GR	E	F	IRL	I	L	NL	P	UK*
Disease	23.6	16.9	26.0	14.1	25.0	24.9	28.0	**20.1**	23.0	20.8	32.4	18.5
Invalidity	8.4	8.6	8.6	9.0	7.8	5.6	6.7	**6.5**	10.8	20.9	10.6	11.3
Accidents	1.9	0.7	2.7	0.1	2.1	1.8	0.5	**2.2**	2.8		2.3	0.3
Old age	32.0	35.5	29.7	53.4	31.3	35.2	20.5	**50.6**	30.6	29.9	31.2	38.5
Reversibility	10.3	0.1	9.8	10.1	9.6	6.1	5.8	**10.9**	13.7	5.2	6.8	1.2
Maternity	0.7	1.5	0.7	0.5	0.9	1.3	2.0	**0.4**	1.4	0.5	0.7	1.2
Family	7.0	9.7	6.7	0.7	0.8	7.7	10.5	**3.0**	11.7	4.6	4.2	9.8
Placement	1.5	5.3	2.2		0.7	1.9	3.8	**0.1**	1.0		0.5	1.1
Unemployment	9.0	11.0	6.6	2.5	16.7	5.8	12.7	**2.3**	1.2	10.0	5.0	5.9
Accommodation		2.4	0.7	0.6	0.3	3.0	3.1	**0.0**	0.2	1.0	0.0	6.8
Miscellaneous	1.3	5.5	2.4	3.9	1.0	1.5	2.1	**0.0**	0.1	2.6	1.0	1.5
Administration	3.2	2.8	2.6	4.1	2.3	3.9	4.2	**3.4**	2.8	3.8	4.8	3.7
Other current expenses	1.1		1.3	1.0	1.5	1.3	0.1	**0.5**	0.7	0.6	0.4	0.1
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	**100**	100	100	100	100

** data refers to 1993*
*** expenditure computed vis-à-vis invalidity*
Source: Eutostat, "Social Protection Expenditure and Receipts 1980-94". Luxembourg 1996. pages 40-66

Chart 1 Current Expenditure for Unemployment/Placement 1994 (% of overall social expenditure).



Source: Eurostat, "Social Protection Expenditure and Receipts 1980-94". Luxembourg 1996.

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4 A final and significant factor is ***follow-up*** known in the literature as the *suivi* phase. In fact, once users have managed to conclude the training course that has enabled them to reconstruct a professional identity and to identify a personal work project, they find themselves confronting the world of work, in particular employers, who frequently harbour a certain mistrust if not real prejudice towards them. Just consider the case of the long-term unemployed. Furthermore, although the guidance phase has provided the necessary instruments to operate autonomously in the labour market, the user, especially the adult user, remains a child of his/her time when a culture existed of jobs being sought in a social-welfare type environment. Thus, if the first impact with production reality is negative, there is a risk that the user might recede into a state of depression even more serious than the one s/he had at the beginning. To avoid this situation which for the individual user implies further personal failure and for society a waste of financial and other resources, it is important to support the user in the transition phase towards job integration according to the users' needs (for example, with a more in-depth knowledge of how he/she handles interviews, how to write a CV, etc.)

Finally, another element that characterises quality guidance is that connected to the **skills and vocational training of the practitioners.** In the first place, and above all, although specific duties, in the broad sense, are foreseen for different professional figures within the field of guidance (front desk operator, counsellor in the strict sense of the word and planner) some common points can be identified:

- ***relational skills and empathy with the user as well as the ability to identify*** with his/her problems. From a plethora of studies it has clearly emerged how learning skills - this is particularly true for women - are strictly correlated to the user's emotive involvement and their maximisation by the practitioners themselves. Consequently, the practitioners must have some basic psychology skills.
- ***In-depth knowledge of the labour market*** both from a point of view of changes concerning institutional structure and its regulation as well as from a point of view of labour demand;
- ***Knowledge of active and passive labour polices,*** particularly all interventions concerning disadvantaged groups;
- ***Knowledge of labour legislation;***
- ***Close contact with different subjects and institutional levels, the social partners and other organisations*** for networking purposes.

In the second place, there is the issue of guaranteeing training for the practitioners themselves. One of the problems, in fact, that the managers of new employment services find themselves facing is the guaranteeing of practitioner training because the practitioners are often the same people who, prior to the enforcement of the reform ratified by legislative decree 469/97, managed, in a bureaucratic and certificatory manner, the old placement system provided by central administration.

In the third place, it is extremely important to **guarantee constant updating** of practitioners with regard to the above mentioned skills.

In the fourth place, practitioners need to know **how to handle problems connected to emotional overload** and the work stress known as burn-out. In fact, users at risk of social exclusion often tend to invest in the practitioner all their anxieties, fears and frustrations. If he/she is not equipped to deal with the situation there is a risk that this problem of handling emotional overload and work stress could possibly result in a state of depression.

Finally, **guaranteeing stability of employment for practitioners in employment service provider centres**. These are usually workers who do not have a fixed but a temporary contract. The precariousness of the position could exert a negative influence upon the practitioner and, consequently, upon the user.

Recommendations for policy makers and funding bodies

From an analysis and consideration of the previous paragraph, a series of indications and recommendations can be drawn up for policy makers.

A first recommendation to those planning and implementing active labour policies is to be aware of the lack of an "active" culture vis-à-vis job seeking. People who are young or not so young do not understand the changes that have taken place in the production system and, as a consequence, in the labour market over the last twenty years and therefore expect someone to find them a job. They do not understand that the possibility of finding a job is strictly linked to their ability to look for one, to maximising their own self-esteem and to an awareness of their own abilities. This means looking at things from a different viewpoint: from a passive to an active attitude. If those seeking a job do not implement this change, which is a cultural change, they run the risk, above all, of lapsing into depression because of the frustration of not finding a job and secondly of activating a process of auto-exclusion from the labour market that could result in real social exclusion.

Added to this non-comprehension of the right attitude for correct job seeking, there is the unrealistic expectation about the type of job to be found. In fact, the job model which most people think of and hope to find is an eight hour job with a fixed contract, possibly in the services sector for white collar workers. This consideration enables us to see how information and guidance interventions must, perforce, be an integral part of the cultural-educational experience.

A second recommendation concerns the model for the institutional structure of the labour market and its regulations in view of the creation of future employment services, provided for by the reform ratified by legislative decree no. 469/97. A top-down model of a network type is desirable.

This means proposing a labour market regulation model based on the following principles:

- principle of subsidiarity among the institutional levels with strong territorial rooting;
- connection between different institutional levels;
- network collaboration among the different economic and social actors and their services.

Maximising an approach from the bottom does not mean that the functions of "higher" government levels are passive or marginal. On the contrary, it is a question of giving the Region or the Province (this depends on the regional legislation of each region) a political orientation role, of regulation and control that is expressed in programming an intervention framework. Within this regulatory role, the following become of crucial importance: promoting communication conditions and profitable co-ordination among the different subjects belonging to different social and economic systems (social partners, enterprises, vocational training, etc.).

This is important for three reasons. Above all, to make the programming of the interventions themselves more effective and efficient. It is here necessary to specify that planning specific interventions for the weaker adult groups (e.g. unemployed 45 year olds with low qualifications ousted from industry) is often the only effective tool for re-integration into the labour market. Therefore, for these people, the guidance path must be included in a concrete job re-integration programme. In fact, it is a question of dealing with people with low educational qualifications and low incomes whose professional skills have become obsolete and who have enormous difficulty in learning how to move autonomously within the labour market. At least two reasons can be found for this.

The first is linked to the fact of being children of a Fordist job culture (every cultural change requires a great deal of time) and the second to less flexibility in learning, on the one hand, because those under discussion are over a certain age and, on the other, because they have only done one job throughout their lives, with times and rhythms that cannot be compared to those of today.

Starting from this observation, we come to the second reason why co-ordination between the different subjects and services is extremely important. The weaker groups of the work-force, in fact, need a series of extra services in addition to those provided by guidance to become, once again "employable" in the labour market. These services vary widely from person to person. They can be refresher training courses such as, for example, foreign language courses, but also services linked to the above mentioned "restraints" (organisation of family life, etc.).

The third reason is linked to social marketing, already previously mentioned. To this we would like to add only one comment. On the one hand, it is necessary that the communications system and the vocational training, guidance and information system on the other, work closely together.

The above leads to a fourth recommendation: the importance of the integration of active labour policies with training, industrial and social policies.

Another key point which we would like both policy makers and practitioners to reflect on is the one relative to information about employment services. From the first job centre experiments now under way in the Province of Milan, it clearly emerges how these centres tend to make exaggerated use of IT systems to support the matching of labour supply with demand, thus reducing the guidance activity to one of mere information about labour market opportunities and its institutional transformations. Not only does this not lead to hoped-for results in terms of placement, but heavily penalises, for reasons already mentioned, the weaker groups of the labour market.

A final recommendation concerns the importance, often underestimated, of assessment activities. In order to understand the limitations of labour policies and improve resource allocation used for employment services it is necessary to be able to assess policies already implemented.

To understand the significance and limitations of labour policies, we first need to make explicit the objectives these policies are intended to pursue and identify the theoretical reference models. In other words, we need to have a clear picture of the cause-and-effect relations labour policies are intended to affect, that is, the fundamental theoretical hypotheses whereby the facts and problems to be tackled are explained. Thus, the emphasis needs to be placed on the degree of success or failure in achieving objectives within the estimated time span. This is where we come up against the problem of measuring, or rather, evaluating, the effects of the labour policies adopted. It is a complicated problem in terms of both methodology and application.

We need to remember that labour policies tend to vary, that they do not always have the same objectives or even compatible objectives, and that they are usually part of co-ordinated economic-policy programmes, which further complicates the picture. In this context, it is far from easy to isolate the effects attributable to specific labour-policy measures, though there is no lack of valuable suggestions from the developing fields of the social sciences and statistics, which may help us to make some decisive progress in the field of the evaluation of the effects of labour policies.

A labour-policy measure may be evaluated from two main viewpoints:

- with a view to checking implementation of the measure (*process evaluation)*,

- with a view to assessing the results attributable to the programme (*outcome evaluation)*.

More specifically, *process evaluation* concerns *who is implementing the measure*, with reference to:

- financial correctness and honest accounting as regards the use of resources;
- measuring the estimated effects of a particular programme, in terms of cost or product indicators (*monitoring*). In this latter case, provision is made for establishing indicators that can be set up as targets for the management of the programme or, in some more sophisticated cases, a combination of elements to help evaluate the appropriateness and functioning of the organisational structures to which labour-policy programmes are entrusted. In other words, monitoring is an evaluation process whose purpose is to ascertain how a measure is launched, implemented and managed. It therefore leads to qualitative conclusions concerning institutional processes and variables, even if use is made of the quantitative variables for "efficiency" and "success" in the functioning of the institutions involved.

Outcome evaluation, on the other hand, starts from the assumption that a certain policy may not achieve satisfactory results even if it is properly implemented. The objects of analysis is, therefore, not the body implementing the measure but the measure itself, with:

- the evaluation of labour policies in terms of *effectiveness.* In this case, it is a question of establishing a quantitative relation between the results achieved and those pursued, with a view to ascertaining whether there has been any change, in the right direction, in the pre-existing situation. In this way, what is evaluated is the congruence between objectives and instruments and, therefore, the choice between alternative measures.
- the evaluation of labour policies in terms of *efficiency.* In this case, the aim is to quantify the relation between the costs and benefits associated with a certain decision, with a view to optimising costs in relation to the objective being pursued.

Outcome evaluation may also be used in two different fields of analysis: on the Macro and Macro and Micro level.

There are many problems here: the variety of types of counselling makes measuring very complicated; some of the results of counselling are not measurable; policy-makers tend to take a cost-benefit approach.

Without going into detail, we can distinguish the following methods of evaluation:

1) experimental methods and 2) non-experimental methods (Geroldi G. , Maiello M.).

For a more in-depth analysis please see the working papers of Geroldi G., Maiello M., *Eurocounsel*, Final Reports. Phase I, II e III of Eurocounsel, European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, Dublin 1992,1993, 1994.

GLOSSARY

Labour Force: Total employed + those searching a job

Employed

1. Who described themselves as being employed

2. Who described themselves as not being employed, but stated that they had performed at least some paid work during the reference week

Searching for a job
1. Unemployed

2. First-time job seekers

3. Those who described themselves as housewives, students, people who have decided to stop working but who also, during a subsequent question, claimed to be seeking a job

Not members of the labour force: This includes those people who said that they had not worked or looked for a job during the reference week.

People of the working-age population (15-70 years)

> job seekers (actions 2-6 months willing to work immediately and 7-24 months for registration with the public placement office and participation in public competitions)
>
> people who stated that they were not seeking work but felt that they could carry on an occupation under particular conditions
>
> who stated that they were not seeking work and had no possibility of or interest in carrying on an occupation.

People not of working age: Those up to 14 and over 70

Employment in absolute terms: Total number of people employed.

Employment rate: Ratio between the number of employed and working-age population (15-70 years).

Activity rate: Percentage of the working-age population in the labour force (15-70 years).

Unemployment rate: Ratio between job seekers and overall labour force (the employed + job seekers).

Unemployed youth rate: Ratio between the number of unemployed aged between 15-24 and the labour force aged between 15-24

Long-term unemployment rate: Ratio between the number of the long-term unemployed and the total number of unemployed

Feminisation rate: Percentage of women out of the total population (men and women)

CHAPTER THREE

ACCESS TO VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE IN IRELAND

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SOCIAL EXCLUSION IN IRELAND

"Poverty in Ireland today is about being excluded and marginalised from the general standard of living and way of life that is the norm for other people in society. Thus people are living in poverty if their income and resources are so inadequate as to preclude them from enjoying a lifestyle which would be acceptable by society generally. Such a definition takes account of the fact that people have social, emotional and cultural needs as well as physical needs" Combat Poverty Agency's Strategic Plan (1993-1995).

Despite growing wealth and increasing numbers of people in employment, Ireland has failed to come to grips with some of its more intransigent problems such as widespread poverty, larger numbers of people being barred from doing meaningful work and extensive exclusion of a substantial proportion of the population from any meaningful participation in the life of our society.

Almost one third of the population lives below the poverty line. An even higher proportion of the nation's children falls into this category. If unemployment is to be eliminated by the year 2000 we need a net gain of 437,000 on the present number of jobs available. In other words numbers need to increase by 37 per cent over the next five years if unemployment is to be eliminated.

Poverty has also been increasing. There are many more people living in poverty today than there were twenty years ago, no matter where one draws the poverty line.

Key Facts:

- 21 per cent of persons fell below the 50 per cent relative income poverty line in 1994 and 34 per cent of people fell below the 60 per cent relative income poverty line - for a single person the 50 per cent line was about £65 in 1994 and the 60 per cent line was worth about £77.
- There was an increase of 2 per cent in the numbers experiencing poverty at the 50 per cent line since 1987, and an increase of up to 4 per cent in the numbers experiencing poverty at the 60 per cent line.
- While the numbers of households and people below relative poverty lines were higher at the 50 per cent and 60 per cent lines in 1994 than in 1987, the depth of poverty had been reduced, in other words their incomes did not fall as far below the income lines as they did in 1987.
- Households headed by an unemployed person were the largest group in poverty, representing about one third of all households in poverty at the 50 per cent income line, and also faced the greatest risk of poverty - households headed by someone working full time in the home made up the next largest groups in poverty.

- Children continue to face a higher risk of poverty than adults - the risk of poverty for children was almost 30 per cent at the 50 per cent line and over 40 per cent at the 60 per cent line - for adults the corresponding risks were 18 per cent and 32 per cent.
- Ireland is one of the poorest regions of the EU; its GDP per capita being about two thirds of the Union average. The unemployment rate for 1997 stood at 10.2 per cent As in other European countries the rate is unevenly distributed. In some housing estates in larger urban areas, unemployment rates are up to 80 per cent. In rural areas problems of unemployment are compounded by underemployment and emigration.

In carrying out this research the primary source of information is a wide ranging study carried out by the Economic and Social Research Institute in 1987 and by the more recent survey conducted also by the ESRI, *Living In Ireland Survey*, 1994. The purpose of this research was to lay down valid guidelines for the measurement of poverty in Ireland; to estimate numbers in poverty; and to classify those most in poverty or at risk of being so. The ESRI found that, taking a poverty line of 50 per cent of average disposable income, 23 per cent of the national population fell below that line. Comparable figures for the other European countries suggest similar levels of poverty in Portugal and Greece, marking these three countries as a group with exceptionally high levels of poverty in Europe. The ESRI classified those living in poverty and at risk of being so. A number of broad categories emerged. The main groups living in poverty were the unemployed (33 per cent), farmers (23.2 per cent) and the low paid (13.2 per cent). The statistics relating to the *Composition of Households in Poverty by Labour Force Status 1973-1994* describes the following groups as being in poverty: unemployed (33 per cent), farmers (9 per cent) although this group has disputed this figure recently, disabled (9 per cent), retired (10 per cent) and persons involved in home duties (25 per cent). Subsequent studies suggested two further important dimensions to poverty in Ireland. First there was evidence that poverty affected women disproportionately and that lone parents were at a considerably higher risk of poverty. Second, households with children were at much greater risk than households without children (23 per cent compared to 13 per cent).

Since this 1987 study the debate on poverty in Ireland has been gradually redefined in terms of 'social exclusion'. Social exclusion is a much more dynamic concept of the processes of social change than poverty. Social exclusion draws attention to its underlying causes as much as its manifestations. It refers to the structures and processes which exclude persons and groups from full participation in society. By definition social exclusion flows directly from the economic policies and the choices which society makes about how resources are used and who has access to them. The forces of exclusion change as economies and societies change. Social exclusion takes a combination of forms - economic, cultural, social legal - with multiple effects.

Social exclusion can be succinctly described as cumulative marginalisation: from production (unemployment), from consumption (income poverty), from social networks (community, family, neighbours), from decision making and from an adequate quality of life. Social exclusion is one of the major challenges currently facing Irish society. It is not just about lack of money, but may also be about isolation, lack of work, lack of educational opportunities and discrimination.

The main factors which place people at risk of social exclusion in Ireland are:

- Unemployment - households headed by an unemployed person are most likely to experience poverty. This is particularly the case for persons who are unemployed.
- Disability - households headed by a person who is disabled are also very likely to experience poverty. In addition people with disabilities experience social exclusion, for example, because of mobility problems and the inaccessibility of the

built environment. A survey of the members of one organisation found that 50 per cent are not involved in any social activity.

- Large family size
- Lone parenthood - labour force participation by lone parents is amongst the lowest in the EU
- Social class – households headed by unskilled manual workers have a high incidence of poverty whereas professional and non-manual households have a much lower incidence. Links can also be identified between social class and educational achievement and between class and unemployment.
- Gender – policies in relation to women which emphasise dependency, difficulties in accessing paid employment, the lower levels of women's earnings and the lack of support for women in the home also contribute.
- Low pay – Between 15 and 25 per cent of employees could be counted as low paid. Women are heavily over represented in this category.
- Lack of educational qualifications
- Housing policies – traditional housing policies that have concentrated large numbers of unemployed people have contributed to poverty and social exclusion.
- Marital breakdown – this tends to lead to an increased incidence of poverty for the persons concerned, particularly for women and children.
- Inadequate income from social welfare
- Indebtedness to moneylenders

In Ireland the single biggest contributor to social exclusion, and to poverty, is unemployment. Conversely, access to work, to adequately paid employment, is a major source of participation. Thus the most effective strategy for the achievement of greater social inclusion is one which focuses, across several fronts, on increasing employment and reducing unemployment.

In the recently published Anti-Poverty Strategy five key themes central to the tackling of poverty and social exclusion were identified:

- reducing unemployment, particularly long-term unemployment
- Eliminating educational disadvantage
- Increasing income inadequacy
- Regenerating disadvantaged urban communities with a concentration of poverty; and
- Tackling poverty in rural areas

The forecasts of the ESRI's *Medium Term Review* (1997) predict that the next decade or so will be a period of exceptionally rapid economic growth and improving living standards. The scale of the expected increase in employment is such that the unemployment rate projected for ten years time is only about half the current rate of 12 per cent, and compares with the figure of 17 per cent seen as recently as 1993.

This would be a remarkable achievement and would in itself make very substantial inroads into current levels of poverty and social exclusion. The forecast is highly contingent, with the increase in employment in particular depending on continuing wage moderation. A crucial issue is going to be the distribution of the projected increase in employment, and the extent to which long-term employment is reduced. Even in a buoyant job market such as we are currently experiencing, those with poor education and skill levels may find it very difficult to escape from long-term unemployment into a job and the tax and social welfare system can exacerbate the problem ("The Benefit Trap"). Currently those who have been unemployed for more than two years have a 74 per cent chance of being unemployed one year later. This rises to over 80 per cent for men aged 25-44 and to 90 per cent for men aged 45-54. Certain groups could be excluded from the benefits of employment growth, remaining unemployed for lengthy periods or drifting out of meaningful participation in the labour market, with serious consequences both for them and for their children given the strength of forces transmitting unemployment and poverty from one generation to another. Among these groups are:

- Disabled persons
- Travellers
- People in rural areas
- Women

These groups will form the case studies for this project.

Disabled persons

The absence of overall statistics about the number of people with disabilities in Ireland and the lack of research into specific areas of disability makes this group particularly challenging in respect of this project. Oft-quoted figures concerning unemployment among this group suggest unemployment rates of as much as 58 per cent. There are several difficulties involved in compiling accurate statistics about the number of people with disabilities. These include the definition of people with disability: whether it is based on medical definition or on the definition favoured by the Commission, which is based on a social definition that sees disability as something that arises from a society's failure to adapt itself to the different ways in which people with impairments accomplish activities. Another difficulty is that disability is a relative concept and therefore requires a cut-off point as though the degree of severity of disability (however defined) affects which would be included or excluded.

Even when cut off points and definitions are agreed, the problem remains of estimating the numbers of persons in the categories corresponding to the categories in the definitions. This would require a major survey of the population. A report from the ERSI suggests that the prevalence and incidence of disabilities could be estimated from existing data in three ways:

1) By reference to statistics on disability related income support schemes

2) On the basis of data from the census and from the LFS on people who are outside the labour force for reasons of permanent sickness or disability.

3) From the results of sample surveys in which people themselves estimate

   a the extent to which they are 'hampered in their daily activities by any chronic physical or mental health problem, illness or disability' (*The Living In Ireland Survey*, 1994) or

   b the degree of difficulty they have in carrying out certain daily activities

The area of mental handicap, or intellectual disability, is the only area of disability in which comprehensive statistics are collected systematically for administrative purposes. The Department of Health established a computerised national mental handicap database in 1995 for the first time. The statistics for 1995 show, in general terms, that there are approximately 26,000 persons with intellectual disabilities from mild disability to profound disability known to the Health Boards, of whom over 6,000 are children under 15 years.

Another approach to estimating disability in Ireland is to rely on estimates arrived at in other countries, including the United Kingdom, where comprehensive surveys have been done. However, the differences between Ireland and these other countries in terms of demographic structure, historical experience, economic conditions and public attitudes make such an exercise hazardous. Grannenos (1995) in his *Disabled Persons: Statistical Data*, published by the Statistical Office of the European Communities presents detailed tables based on censuses, surveys and administrative data in each country. Ireland is included but generally speaking the information from Ireland is not comprehensive. In relation to types of disability, the conclusions in the report are as follows:

Persons with an intellectual or psychiatric impairment account for 5 to 15 per cent of all people with disabilities, with a sensory impairment for 10 per cent to 18 per cent and physical impairment for 50 per cent to 80 per cent.

There is no reason to think that these general conclusions do not apply to Ireland too, although the relevant data is not available for Ireland.

The estimated number of people with disabilities, at 360,000 represents 10 per cent of the population as compared with an average of 12 per cent for EU countries. Half these people are aged 60 and over.

Travellers

One of the main groups living in extreme poverty in Ireland is Travellers. There are about 3,500 Traveller Families in Ireland, numbering about 20,000 people (0.5 per cent of the population). Travellers have their own language, intermarry among themselves and have their own social customs. They attempt to make a living through seasonal work, resurfacing driveways and trading in old cars, scrap metal and batteries.

The living conditions of most Travellers are seriously inadequate by modern standards. Less than half of all Travellers live in settled accommodation, 6 per cent live in prefabricated buildings and 50 per cent in roadside caravans. Only 53 per cent of all Travellers have piped water; 49 per cent have access to a toilet; 38 per cent have bath facilities. Poor living conditions are reflected in low standards of health: the infant mortality rate is three times higher than Settled people; 5 per cent of Travellers live to 50 and only 1.7 per cent of them survive to the age of 65 years. The enrolment rate of Travellers in primary school is 75 per cent; only 10 per cent continue school after the age of 12; the illiteracy rate of adult Travellers is about 90 per cent. Travellers suffer considerable discrimination, exemplified by the practice where many pubs and shops refuse to serve them. Most Travellers are dependent on social welfare; only a small number are in waged activity.

Traveller participation in the mainstream labour force is very low. Travellers can be identified as a distinct group in the long-term unemployed. In June, 1994 a survey was carried out by the National Association of Traveller Training Centres of Travellers of people who had participated over the previous decade in courses run by Traveller Training Centres which confirmed this low participation in mainstream labour force and a diverse range of experiences of participation in the mainstream labour force.

Reasons advanced in the survey for this low participation rate include:

- Low pay and poor working conditions
- Need for further training
- Cultural factors
- Lack of acceptance by Settled counterparts

- Lack of support from the Traveller Community
- Movement and emigration

Women

" We are concerned that the Government should devise an approach to women's employment which would reflect the actual lifestyles trends of women and so take into account such factors as: the growing participation in employment by women with young children; structural and attitudinal barriers; problems caused by a segregated labour market; and low pay rates of many women" (Second Commission on the Status of Women, 1994).

In Ireland where specific disincentives exist which discourage women in the home from registering as unemployed, official figures tend to undercount the numbers of women who would like to be in paid employment. It is estimated that approximately half of women's unemployment is registered and this is one of the lowest rates in Europe (CEC, 1992, 1995). This is particularly true of Live Register figures. The LFS, which allows people to specify their own employment status and their social welfare status, is a better overall indicator of the labour force.

The two main trends in the Irish labour force over recent decades have been a marked increase in the numbers of people, particularly women, participating in the formal labour market, and the increase in the number out of work.

Unemployment and long-term unemployment amongst women has been increasing at a faster and disproportionately higher rate than unemployment amongst men (Walsh 1993). The number of people on the live register increased by 26 per cent between 1980 and 1993 (Duggan 1995) and women now make up 23 per cent of those officially signing for credits and 33 per cent of those defining themselves as unemployed. The proportion of women who were unemployed for over one year in 1993 was 36.4 per cent and the long-term unemployment rate among women is 8.1 per cent, very similar to that of men at 10.5 per cent.

Women make up 49.35 per cent of the total population of working age but only 32.3 per cent of the labour force. The labour force participation rate of Irish women remains one of the lowest in the EU where the overall rate average participation for women is 42 per cent. It is also significantly lower than the overall participation rate for men which although declining remains almost twice as high as that for women Men, unlike women, also maintain consistently high participation rates throughout the life cycle and across all sectors of marital status.

While the proportion of the labour force made up of women has grown only slightly in the last twenty years, the nature of the female labour force has changed enormously. The numbers of young women have fallen dramatically from 47.6 per cent to 21.1 per cent due largely to increased participation in education. The numbers of older women in the labour force have also fallen due to the improvement in pension eligibility, a lower retirement age and to changes in the labour market itself which have led to a fall in agricultural employment. By far the most significant change in the Irish labour market has been the increase in the participation rate of married women and the growing numbers of women with children who are staying in and rejoining the workforce.

However the participation rate of women with children in Ireland is only 22.2 per cent, the lowest among all women in the working age groups. This rate falls to 12 per cent for those women with three or more children, a clear indication of the extent to which childcare responsibilities disadvantage women in relation to the labour market as it is currently structured.

Within the broad category of women it is clear that lone mothers are in an unequal position vis-à-vis labour market status in comparison to their married counterparts. According to data from the European Labour Force Survey (LFS) in 1989, just over one third of Irish lone mothers with a child aged 5-9 are in the labour force but 42 per cent of those under the age of 40 compared to 25 per cent of all mothers under 40 with a school age child are unemployed.

Labour force participation rates are only one indicator of the labour market status of women. The kind of employment which women access is another and is affected by the same influences as shape women's participation rates. Women tend to be concentrated in particular kinds of jobs and at particular levels of employment within different areas of work. As a result women are more likely to be found in low quality, part-time, low paid insecure work. For example, over 75 per cent of women are to be found in services, traditionally a low paid sector of employment. Women's average pay is lower than men's - in Ireland over the last ten years women's hourly wages have remained at 68 per cent of men's, and women make up 62 per cent of those earning under the poverty threshold.

Furthermore, the vast majority of all part-time workers are women (77 per cent) and 79 per cent of women working part-time are married. One fifth of all women in employment are in part-time work and two thirds of the increase in the number of women at work during the 1980's is accounted for by part-time work. Also women make up 85 per cent of those seeking part-time employment. Part-time employment is associated with insecure and poor working conditions and a lack of entitlements to social insurance and employment legislation. In 1990 half of part-time workers fell below the poverty line and 85 per cent of women part-time workers were in poverty arising from low pay.

Thus it is crucial to recognise that the increase in women's participation in the labour market is a necessary but not a sufficient condition overall improvement to the economic and social status and well being of women.

"*The growing numbers of women taking up or seeking part-time employment may reflect constraints operating on women to take up low quality employment rather than an improvement in the labour market position of women per se" (Duggan 1994).*

LIFELONG LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES IN IRELAND

The long-term unemployed have relatively low levels of formal educational attainment. Almost half of the long-term unemployed are without formal educational qualifications compared with one quarter of those unemployed for less than one year and 15 per cent of those at work. Only 17 per cent have Leaving Certificate level or higher compared with 38 per cent for the short-term unemployed and 60 per cent for those at work. It is the older long-term unemployed who suffer the greatest educational disadvantage. In 1991 over two thirds of the long-term unemployed aged 35 years or more were without any qualifications and only 12 per cent of this group had reached Leaving Certificate level or higher.

For the young unemployed, the relationship between educational qualification and employment success is particularly interesting. In 1992, the unemployment rate among young labour force participants (aged 15-24) with no qualifications was 52 per cent compared to 32 per cent for those with an intermediate or group certificate). Each year approximately 20 per cent of students leave the educational system with no qualifications whatsoever or with poor qualifications. It is almost inevitable that a large percentage of those will become long-term unemployed.

In terms of skill levels, compared to other groups, a greater proportion of the long-term unemployed have a "manual" background - almost half of the long-term unemployed compared to 29 per cent of employees. Only 22 per cent have a services/clerical background, compared with 57 per cent of those employed and 465 of the short-term unemployed. Given that the bulk of new projected employment is likely to arise in the services sector, this is of particular importance. This sets in context our review of existing training and educational opportunities.

The main groups involved in the delivery of lifelong educational opportunities comprise Fas (the National Training Authority) the Department of Social Welfare and Education, including the Vocational and Technical Education agencies (VECs) and the Area Based Partnerships. In addition many voluntary/community groups are actively involved in providing a range of services to the unemployed. Since the needs of the unemployed are multi-dimensional, the response to their needs must be on an inter-agency basis and must also be multi-dimensional. No one agency has a remit that covers all aspects helping people move from the world of unemployment to the world of work. Yet each agency has its own contribution to make to help to achieve this.

1) Education

a) Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme (VTOS)

This is the Department of Education's main scheme for helping the unemployed. VTOS is an umbrella under which courses ranging from foundation/basic education to advanced vocational preparation and training are provided. Courses are tailored to the needs of participants to the greatest extent possible and participants are allowed to influence programmes of study. Courses are full-time with attendance of 30 hours per week and up to two years' duration.

The scheme is for those aged 21 or over and seeking employment who have been in receipt of an unemployment payment or signing for credits for six months or more. Up to 10 per cent of places are reserved each year for lone parents, disabled people who are financially disadvantaged and spouses for whom dependent allowances are payable. Courses are free to participants, who continue to receive payments equal to their welfare entitlements, including secondary benefits. There is no cost for participants for books, materials and examination fees and travelling and meal allowances are payable.

Provision exists for 5,000 places. The expenditure on the scheme in 1994 was in the region of 18.5 million punts of which almost 52 per cent is in lieu of social welfare payment. The scheme is operated through the 38 VECs around the country.

b) Adult Literacy and Community Education Scheme
Under this scheme disadvantaged adults can attend literacy and basic education courses free or at nominal costs. Also grants can be given to community education groups. In 1994 1.788m punts were provided to the VECs to operate the scheme. There is a very high voluntary input with about six hours' voluntary service for each paid hour in the literacy area. The numbers of participants annually in adult literacy tuition are about 5,000 and there are 14,000 in community education courses.

c) Special Initiatives for Disadvantaged Adults in the 12 Pilot areas
A small amount of funding (£136,000) in 1994 is allocated between the VECs in whose area the Area Based Partnership Companies operate. The funding is used to provide short intensive education/training courses for unemployed people in consultation with the Partnership Companies and to support these companies' education/training plans.

d) Social Welfare
Third Level Allowance
Claimants aged 23 or over who wish to pursue a full-time under-graduate course can continue to receive their unemployment payments. To qualify, persons must have been receiving an unemployment payment for twelve months or more. In the 1994/5 academic year there were 1,200 participants.

Second Level Courses
Persons can attend second level education, while continuing to claim their unemployment benefit. This course must be full time and must lead to a recognised certificate. To qualify, persons must be over 21 and have been receiving an unemployment payment for 12 months or more.

Part-time Courses
Claimants who are eligible for one of the above education schemes or who do not wish to pursue a full-time course may attend part-time education courses without affecting their benefit.

2) Training
a) Development training
Community Training Programmes provide training for unemployed persons within the community. Projects in the broad areas of renovation of community facilities, local history, archaeology and genealogy are being catered for. About 7,000 people participated on this scheme in 1994.

b) Industry training for the unemployed
Through its training centre network and external training facilities, Fas provides around 150 different training courses of an industrial and commercial nature for unemployed persons. These courses provide recognised qualifications and are aimed at improving an individual's job prospects.

c) Other training programmes
There are a number of innovative training programmes, which are funded by the global grant under the local development programme and operated through the Area Partnerships.

A recent task force on long-term unemployment identified a number of gaps in existing services for the unemployed. The main deficiencies identified in terms of nation-wide, comprehensive, integrated services are as follows:

- The absence of an effective Guidance and Counselling Service
- Information deficit
- Registration of clients and opportunities
- Active placement service/employer participation
- After-placement assistance
- Progression
- Effective co-ordination of services

The task force identified the importance of a clear delineation of roles combined with effective co-operation and co-ordination between many agencies and groups involved in the provision of services to the unemployed.

THE PROVISION OF VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE FOR ADULTS IN IRELAND

In Ireland the term "guidance" has mainly been associated to date with the provision of a guidance and counselling service in second and third level education, and rehabilitation. In other settings guidance has the connotation of advice and information. Vocational counselling is about personal development and opportunity awareness. The outcomes of counselling have to combine both personal development and an awareness of the opportunities available in terms of employment, training and education and other forms of activity.

Most of the guidance services available in Ireland are based within educational institutions. However in recent years there has been an expansion of services available to those who are entering the labour market and those in employment. A recent Eurocounsel report defines the outcomes of counselling, within the framework of seeing it as broadly focused intervention. The definition has four main elements:

- Direct employment outcomes
- Entry into labour market re-integration schemes and programmes
- Outcomes in the area of combating social exclusion
- Personal development outcomes.

Second Level

The major components of this are career, educational and personal/social counselling. These are undertaken on both an individual and group basis. Guidance counsellors use a range of information materials, assessment techniques and experiential methods. To be employed as a guidance counsellor one must normally possess a primary degree, a teaching qualification and have a one-year post-graduate diploma in Guidance and Counselling. There are department guidelines and restrictions on the employment of guidance counsellors.

Schools with 5,000 or more pupils may appoint a full-time counsellor, while school with 350-499 may appoint a counsellor on a half-time basis (6 per cent of Irish schools have more than 800 pupils while more than 44 per cent have less than 350 pupils). A consequence of this paucity of guidance counsellors in schools is that early school leavers often fail to avail of counselling and guidance services as the shortage demands that services are focused in the senior cycle. A recent announcement by the Minister for Education of an extra 100 posts for Guidance Counsellors in second level school should improve the situation.

Third Level

Guidance Counsellors work in careers and appointments offices in universities and some (approximately 30 per cent) technical colleges. The components of the service they provide and the professional qualifications required to carry out the job are similar to those pertaining in second-level education. The emphasis at this level is on vocational information, job search skills and placement for final year students. Policy monitoring and development of the service is the responsibility of the individual colleges. As the age profile of those attending such institution changes the service will need to cater more for the "Adult Returner".

Disabled Persons

The National Rehabilitation Board (NRB) has responsibility for providing an assessment, vocational guidance, training and placement service for people with disabilities. Vocational Officers working in co-ordination with the psychological service of the NRB generally possess qualification in psychology, guidance and counselling or social science. The service employs 45 vocational officers and seven psychologists based in six regions throughout the country. The NRB has a throughput of over 4,000 people annually.

Training Agencies

Fas, the employment and training agency, provides an employment recruitment service and operates training and employment programmes. Fas staff give advice and information on training and employment at their employment services offices and undertake screening of applicants for the training courses that Fas itself runs. The majority of the services are generic, in that they are aimed at all adults. In the return to work courses, which are aimed at women, guidance is a pervasive feature. Guidance elements are commonly included in community programmes designed to provide short-term employment, in training programmes related to particular areas of employment and in training programmes for self employment. Their training courses contain a module on job search skills. Personnel responsible for such guidance normally undertake a training course of three to twelve weeks' duration.

Other government agencies include:

- CERT (Hotel & Catering)
- TEAGASC (Agriculture & Horticulture)
- BIM (Fishery)
- COILLTE (Forestry)
- VEC (Vocational and Technical Education)

These agencies provide advice and information on request. Their service normally involves screening agencies for their training courses. There is a link with the schools service through information provision and exchange.

Other agencies

Youth information services

These centres play a valuable role in giving advice to young people, particularly disadvantaged groups. They are largely concentrated in urban areas. The Youth Exchange Bureau co-ordinates a network of 25 youth information centres at various stages of sophistication.

Unemployment resource centres/Partnership companies

Set up under the Programme for Economic and Social Progress as part of the Area Based Response to Unemployment, these partnership companies, twelve in all, provide counselling and information for the long-term unemployed in their unemployment resource centres. These centres, which were set up by the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, act as a bridge between unemployment and employment. They are funded mainly by Fas, trade unions, local national and international organisations and from their own fund-raising activities. The bulk of their activity involves providing information on training courses available.

Private Guidance Agencies
There are a number of private agencies providing educational and vocational guidance on a fee-paying basis.

There is no formal provision for vocational counselling for adults at present.

Overseeing, decision making and administration bodies

Institute of Guidance Counsellors This organisation represents over 600 members whose work is day to day contact with pupils in the context of career, educational and social decision making

AGCSI Association of Graduate Career Services in Ireland, for careers and advice services in Higher Education

An bord Altrani-s State agency responsible for the training of nurses

AONTAS The National Association for Adult Education

BIM - State agency for education and training of personnel in the fishing industry

CERT - Council of Education, Recruitment and Training for the Hotel and Catering industry

COILLTE - State agency for training in the forestry industry

Department of Education

Department of Enterprise and Employment

Department of Social Welfare

Employment Equality Agency

The European Dimension: PETRA, NCU National Vocational and Guidance Centre (ICG)

Established under Action 111 of PETRA in 1992 this centre provides an information service on vocational education and training and higher education in the EU. To date PETRA and EURES have been the chief catalysts in introducing a European dimension to vocational information and guidance. The two information centres set up under Action 111 (the other centre is in Fas) act as contact points at both national and international levels and aim to stimulate transnational activities. PETRA has also supported financially the development of a national database on vocational education and training, Qualifax, and a handbook on higher education, training and work in Europe, which has been published by the IGC.

CASE STUDIES

Case study no. 13

West of Ireland Network for New Sources of Jobs (WINNSJ)

West of Ireland Network for New Sources of Jobs (WINNSJ)
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A History, context and general structure

This organisation, The West Of Ireland Network For New Sources Of Jobs, was established in July 1997. The project proposed five counties in the West of Ireland as a pilot area for the development of an integrated strategy to promote and support several areas of service provision as New Sources For Jobs (NSJs).

This initiative is being co-financed by various agencies, The Council For The West, North Western Health Board, Sligo County Council and Roscommon County Council, and is supported by the European Commission. It also involves support from other agencies such as Fas and other Partnership boards. A small management committee has been established with representatives from the afore-mentioned agencies. Sub committees comprising of people directly involved in each pilot project are also established with responsibility for decision making in relation to individual job areas.

The WINNSJ employs four full-time personnel but relies upon further staffing through the provision of employees from Fas (the national training agency). The organisation has a core group of voluntary workers with a total employment of 17 persons in a full-time or part-time capacity.

B Functions, target groups and content

WINNSJ is an organisation focusing upon identifying new areas of service provision and thus identifying new sources of jobs in an area of Ireland, which has suffered traditionally from high unemployment. The organisation is supported by various agencies also involved in rural development as mentioned and the WINNSJ covers a geographical area of the five counties in the West of Ireland, (Donegal, Sligo, Roscommon, Mayo and Galway). In developing this organisation the focus remains upon individuals seeking employment within their own environment.

The project has identified four areas as potential sources for jobs. These are:

- Childcare
- Elderly/People with special needs
- Maintenance/House repair
- Estate Management

An integral part of the project is the inclusion of measures to increase the status of the proposed job areas above, upgrade the skills of those taking up the initiatives and promote the sustainability of these NSJs. These measures include the development of proposals to Government for financial incentives to promote the uptake of initiatives, i.e. reductions in income tax, reduced employment costs.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

WINNSJ has developed a number of accredited training courses allowing participants to acquire recognised skills. During training, participants are encouraged and assisted with looking at potential models of employment as a means of allowing them to progress to sustainable employment. An eight-week module of training in business skills is also provided with each course and participants are encouraged to establish work patterns on a contractual basis either in the public or private sector.

There are four courses on offer with support for accreditation and one of those of most interest is the repair and maintenance course, which takes a multi-skilled approach to the retraining of the unemployed. This course is designed to produce multi-skilled personnel and regularise the "handyman" culture which currently exists. The objective is to aid diversification of the underemployed, unemployed specialist trades people or those previously involved in the farming community. Requirements for participation in this course demand that the individual be over 18 years of age and unemployed. There are no requirements regarding previous related skills. The average age of participants in this course is 35 years with the eldest trainee being 55 years of age. This course lasts for a period of ten months and includes the business enterprise module consisting of eight weeks. Trainees are also required to participate in a two-week work placement where they have the opportunity to gain a degree of work experience prior to the completion of the course.

John, 37 years of age, is a participant of the above course and joined when, having worked for a multinational for 20 years, he became redundant upon closure of the site. Although skilled for employment with his employer, John had little choice in terms of alternative employment in such a rural area where employment is scarce. John located information regarding this course through his local Fas office. By participating in this course, John has a renewed confidence in his ability to cope and has acquired a series of new skills previously unknown to him. He feels confident that he will locate employment upon cessation of the course and looks forward to the two-week placement with the local County Council.

WINNSJ also provide a series of training courses in areas identified as potential New Sources For Jobs. These courses are also accredited and cover areas such as childcare training, training for carers of the elderly and estate management.

This initiative focuses upon those experiencing unemployment. This area of the West comprises groups of unemployed adults previously involved in local industry or part-time farming, young adults living on small holdings which are no longer viable and school leavers who were unable to take up any training opportunities or locate any form of employment in the area. Much of the social exclusion exists due to severe lack of economic development and opportunities in the region. There are many non-viable agricultural holdings, which would formerly have provided some employment, but with changes in farming practices, this has led to increased unemployment in a traditionally agricultural sector. This issue of transport is also a very specific issue. There is little infrastructure in relation to public transport and a car or access to a car is most definitely not a luxury but rather a necessity. Little or no access to transport automatically excludes.

C Access

Participants can access the course through the various agencies supporting the initiative. Fas, the national training agency, supports the advertisement and recommendation of the scheme to the target group through its employment offices and training lists. Social welfare employment services would also make similar referrals and many individuals hear of this scheme through employer presentations and word of mouth.

Trainees if accepted on the course are supported by a training allowance, which equates to current social welfare allowances. A small mileage allowance is available for those using their own transport. There is no charge for participation in this course for trainees.

D Networking

The West Of Ireland Network For New Sources Of Jobs is supported by various agencies as mentioned and through the nature of this support, WINNSJ networks with these agencies and the partnership companies supporting their initiative. There is a strong link with Fas who provide a system of support in terms of the provision of advice, staff and promotion of the programme. WINNSJ through the support of the County Councils has some minor links with employers' network and through Fas. The promotion of a work placement automatically qualifies the trainee for a test interview. Fas employment services also provide an important link for trainees and the organisation in terms of promotion of trainees through the employers services section.

E Outcomes and assessment

The West Of Ireland Network For New Sources Of Jobs has successfully identified areas for potential development for new jobs in an area of high unemployment. A total of 84 trainees have participated in training initiatives developed by the WINNSJ since July 1997 and currently this organisation is recruiting 100 further candidates to an accredited course in childcare. Most of these courses are based in centres located in areas where demand is high and where possible courses may be offered on a part-time basis. At present, this organisation is recruiting 100 candidates for participation in a course in childcare, as demand for this provision of professional training is high.

The WINNSJ is supported by a number of agencies and more recently the IPPA (Irish Pre-schools Play Association) have become key partners in the support and development of the childcare training programme and promote a policy of training for employment. Although links with employers are difficult to develop, trainees continue to train and have a strong element of co-operation from supporting agencies.

Ongoing guidance and counselling in its traditional form is available through organisations such as Fas; however in the Sligo and Roscommon areas, the WINNSJ proposes to introduce a mentoring scheme which should be available to trainees upon completion of their course. It is proposed that this scheme be developed in conjunction with Fas and local Partnership companies.

The West Of Ireland For New Sources Of Jobs seems to have responded in a positive way to initiating change in traditional avenues of employment and utilising the many agencies already established in the region as a means of support. This project has been funded by many agencies and by the ESF; however, as a pilot project, this initiative will cease in December 1998 due to the lack of funding.

Case study no. 14

I.R.D. Duhallow

I.R.D. Duhallow
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Contact person: Ms Noreen O'Callaghan

A History, context and general structure

IRD Duhallow is a community based development company established in 1989 to promote rural development in an area of Northwest Cork and East Kerry. The company combines the efforts and resources of the state bodies, local authorities, local communities and individual entrepreneurs for the development and self-progression of individuals and the communities of the local areas.

This organisation benefits from Local Development Plan and Leader 2 funding and is supported by board membership from five different sectors. There are 25 members nominated by the community and elected at the Annual General Meeting (AGM).

There is a core group of ten staff with a wide range of expertise and skills relating to the demands of the community. It is policy to employ a young graduate staff with a commitment to ongoing training and development for staff members, board members and community members to develop a high level of professionalism.

B Function, target groups and content

The objective of IRD is to establish and support initiatives directed toward the generation of enterprise for the benefit and welfare of communities in the Duhallow area who may be deprived, and in necessitous circumstances due to rural depopulation, emigration, lack of training, economic deprivation or poor infrastructure.

The organisation promotes two governmental programmes, the Local Development Programme (LDP) and the Leader 2 programme. IRD is one of 34 groups nationally which has been approved by the government to implement LDP. The programme is characterised by a fostering of community development and an emphasis on placing and setting up support structures to tackle disadvantage and social exclusion. Measures under the local development programme include a series of initiatives such as:

- Focal Farming Programme
- Job Centre
- Business Relief Centre
- Women's Development and Enterprise Programme
- Information Service
- Community Development
- Education & Training
- Duhallow Youth Project

The programmes are aimed specifically at those at risk of unemployment, those unskilled, low income farming families with small quotas, young people and early school leavers and women disadvantaged by remoteness, lack of childcare and transport services.

The Leader 2 initiatives incorporate a funding related support platform for individuals/groups in the Duhallow area to develop enterprise-related initiatives. The funding supports enterprise developments such as animation and capacity building, technical assistance, education, training and tourism.

The Focal Farming Programme developed through the support of the LDP structure is a pertinent example of IRD's response to promoting supportive change within a very traditional sector of the community. Danny Fleming in co-operation with IRD Focal Farming Programme has identified and established a niche market for a new business idea which compliments his ongoing commitment to his farm:

> "Everybody in IRD has been supportive and helpful in setting up my own business. This enterprise in core drilling and chasing is perfect for a farmer like me. With the building trade so strong, I can easily milk my cows morning and evening, do all the jobs and still head off to where my customers are."

C Access

Clients usually hear about this organisation through local employment services, Fas, and marketing and advertising drives by IRD and more recently by clinics established to bring some of the services and potential initiatives to the community rather the community to the service. Word of mouth is a very important vehicle for the promotion of the organisation. The employment of an employment officer within IRD has had a greater impact as the clinics now incorporate an employment and advisory service for users in remote areas unable to access the service.

There is no charge for services provided and clients currently in receipt of social welfare benefits may retain them if participating in an IRD training initiative.

D Networking

Because of the management structure of IRD, the organisation networks with many state and semi-state bodies. Fas, the national training agency will liaise with IRD in terms of co-operation through training courses and community employment schemes. The Dairy Co-operatives, Teagasc and Coillte organisations will, for example, provide a level of expertise and forum of support for the Focal Farming Programme. The structure of the board membership provides a substantial forum for formal and informal networking.

E Outcomes and assessment.

This company, IRD, has developed a range of services and initiatives in response to tackling the elements of social exclusion in this rural area. Initiatives designed to tackle exclusion focus upon various sectors of the community identified as requiring assistance, i.e. women, youth and the farming sector and also establishing programmes. Transport, care of the elderly and childcare restrictions also become an issue regarding access of the individual to the service and in response, IRD have provided access to users by travelling to outlying rural areas and forming clinics for access. The clinics provide a forum not only for access but also identifying other issues related to individuals such as providing a forum or platform for women traditionally isolated due to care restrictions.

In terms of access to guidance and counselling services, the employment service provides a job seeking and information advice service to clients and this may be accessed through any courses supported by the centre, through the rural clinics or by dropping in.

IRD Duhallow is an organisation providing a focus for persons residing in the rural area of West Cork and Kerry borders. Traditionally, farming families have been wholly reliant on the farm as a method of self-reliance and income. In more recent years, the success of farming as the sole means of providing for farming families has changed and increasingly more farmers and spouses are seeking alternative forms of employment outside the traditional areas of the farming sector.

IRD Duhallow has a wide brief in terms of accessing those in rural areas, and providing them with a method of contact and access to alternative training programmes and initiatives designed to access those suffering social exclusion or at risk of social exclusion. The introduction of guidance and counselling in this organisation is based upon an informal method of support through these initiatives as described above and gives the many persons living in rural areas the forum and focus for access and change.

Case study no. 15

Disabled Drivers Association

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The Disabled Drivers Association
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Tel 00 353 94 64054
Fax 00 353 94 64336

Contact Mr. Derek Farrell
Mr. Bill Ryan

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B Functions, target groups and content

The Association's principal concerns are independence and mobility and to achieve its aims it provides an information and support service and operates a Driving School which is the only residential school in Ireland. Access to ongoing training and development is also an integral part of their philosophy and residential vocational training courses are provided free of charge to qualifying persons with disabilities. The DDA endeavours to present physical disability in the best possible light and strives to demonstrate that most physical disabilities can be overcome, and that individuals can achieve their full potential with the benefit and support of training. Members and clients of the DDA are informed of courses and relevant information through membership publications, advertising and fund-raising drives and through agencies such as the NRB, the Federation Of Disability and various support services.

The association targets any person with a disability and the organisation covers the whole of Ireland. Traditionally governmental policies toward the disabled in relation to education, training, employer support initiatives, the built environment and funding has automatically excluded the disabled. Transport is a key issue in relation to social exclusion as is attitude by able-bodied members of the public and society in general.

The provision of driving tuition to the disabled is some measure toward inclusion. Ability Enterprises, the subsidiary of the DDA, provides vocational training programmes in computing and office skills. Courses in IT may be accessed through a distance learning programme operated by Ability Enterprises. Users and students unable to leave their home may study at their own pace with the support of a visiting tutor. Computerised facilities are lent to the student to facilitate their study programme. Students able to access the centre may participate in centre based training programmes in IT or office skills. The centre is residential and caters for all needs of students with disabilities.

C Access

Access to the DDA is mainly directed to clients using the services of the NRB. The association is also promoted through the Irish Council for People With Disabilities and through Local Employment Services and Fas. The association will always access members through membership and fund-raising drives and mailshots. The association provides information to voluntary groups and word of mouth is a means of access for many disabled or carers directly involved with the individual.

D Networking

The Association networks with various voluntary organisations and in a more formal manner with organisations such as Mobility International, the Disability Federation Of Ireland, the Health Boards of Ireland and both the NRB and Fas employment and training services.

E Outcomes and assessment

The DDA was established as a charitable organisation dedicated to ensuring that disabled individuals have the ability to improve their mobility despite disability. This organisation is the only organisation in Ireland to provide a residential care facility to the disabled in terms of providing this type of training. It operates in a rural location in Ireland and emphasises the potential of mobility as being one core method for the disabled to overcome exclusion.

Access to ongoing training and development is an integral part of the philosophy of the Association and to support the residential modules of driver training, the organisation has also established a successful sister organisation dedicated to the training requirements of other disabled clients. The provision of driving tuition provides some sort of measure toward inclusion and its sister organisation, Ability Enterprises, also located on the same residential premises, provides training in Information Technology, computing and office skills. Candidates may also access these courses through distance learning programmes operated by Ability Enterprises.

The residential facility is available to any person indicating a desire to learn to drive or participate in any of the residential courses available and the many courses available are free of charge to members. Support for this organisation is through funding directed to the organisation through the NRB and through a marketing strategy adopted by the DDA.

Whilst the DDA cannot provide a residential occupational guidance and counselling service to its clients, this organisation has been able to utilise the services of the NRB and the in-house or outreach occupational guidance service. The DDA provides an ongoing and supportive service to those suffering exclusion due to disability and by incorporating the flexibility of training through residential and distance learning courses, clients suffering such exclusion have easier access to becoming more independent and encouraging greater inclusion.

Case study no. 16

National Rehabilitation Board

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Mr. Sean O 'Sullivan

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services to the disabled, advising ministerial bodies, public authorities and organisations supporting the disabled. The NRB is also actively involved in raising an awareness of disability issues and putting them on the agenda of decision-makers. The target group of the NRB spans individuals between 16 years and 65 years of age. Access for these clients is also limited of course by disability and where this is a problem, the occupational service will visit homes through their outreach programme. Methods of accessing employment for each individual differs, but much of the success lies in the physical and mental abilities of the individual using the service. Many disabled persons may have only become recently disabled through injury of illness and must come to terms with their particular disability. Others suffering from mental illness may have periodic times when they may be unable to work. Links with the National Training & Development Centre (NTDI), for example, are very useful for persons wishing to come to terms with disability. However, the emphasis must be on the integration of the individual to unbiased, mainstream education where possible.

Services provided by the NRB to the disabled community include advice on building legislation, information and advice on equipment and suppliers for people with disabilities, financial information and training and employment options. The training and employment service within the NRB focuses upon assisting persons with disabilities to source the correct training or the right job, or assists people who may have become disabled to keep their job or retrain for a new one.

In assisting a client to consider training and employment options, the NRB provides a free Occupational Information Guidance Service. Information is readily available on options such as further education, financial support, equipment and technical support and issues relating to access. An individual participating in occupational guidance will be offered access to further training options upon assessment.

The NRB works closely with the NTDI which provides a range of quality flexible training and education courses leading to recognised qualifications and job opportunities. The courses run in conjunction with the NRB and are flexible and tailored toward the students' requirements in terms of time and ability.

In the Cork area the NRB supports training courses for the disabled such as "Fresh Start". This programme was established to provide persons over 18 years currently unemployed as a result of accident, illness or disability, providing an opportunity to retrain. The content of the course includes an option entitled Vocational Exploration, Personal Development and a City and Guilds option in Computer Technology. Other training options available to the disabled by the NRB and in conjunction with the NTDI include employer-based training, distance learning, centre-based training, secretarial studies, electronics, multi-skills programme, and vocational skills foundation and training opportunities programme.

The NRB supports an Employer Support Scheme, which encourages employers to employ a person with a disability. Employers are assisted with funding for adaptation of their work premises and the NRB will fund part of the salary payments to the employee based upon a measure of productivity of the employee. Other schemes designed to encourage persons with disabilities to find and keep employment include equipment loans, Job Clubs, Personal Reader Grant and a Job Interview Interpreter Grant.

In terms of Occupational Guidance assistance is available for persons to identify:

- their occupational strengths
- areas where training and further education could improve their occupational potential
- specific training, further education or other services which may help in achieving these goals

The Occupational Guidance service available to the disabled is an exclusive service designed to assist clients to identify areas of career choice or training options designed to suit particular needs or requirements. Individuals are accessed via a number of methods, namely through referral through the local GP or Health Visitor, via information sessions aimed at health care professionals, school visits and occasional advertising of services.

Problems of accessing clients are centred around the dependency of the NRB on the Health Services and Health Professional to make referrals to the service. Similarly, this dependency also arises through the educational/school system. Many of the potential clients depend upon a network of motivated family member and others involved in their care to continue to reassure and encourage continued access to the service, which is free and confidential. The Disability Allowance previously administered by the Health Boards always provided a supportive method of tracking individuals claiming Disability Allowance and a referral method of clients to the services of the NRB was automatic. More recently, the administration of this Disability Allowance has been carried out by the Social Welfare services and the routine interview process has not continued this referral system to the NRB.

Candidates may access employment through various options; however, through the Occupational Interest Inventory, candidates may identify specific interests and consider options, courses and priorities. Referral may then be made to specific agencies and services such as FAS, the LWS service and other community groups where possible to train for employment or educational purposes. Whilst the Occupational Service provides a job seeking, work experience programme, there is no longer a Placement Service available to candidates and subsequently, links with employers may have a diminished status. Links have, however, continued with employers through the NRB/Employer scheme where candidates will be employed by an employer and part funded by the NRB in terms of funding the employee's salary. Where there is an opportunity for employer based training, this should not be segregated and ideally, training courses could be designed with some form of accreditation in mind to enable individuals to become more employable.

The Government Community Employment Scheme has been very successful in encouraging individuals back to the work environment. Individuals registered with the NRB are eligible for this scheme which employs persons on a part-time basis in the community working in areas such as community support projects. This work suits many disabled people as the work is part-time, registrants do not lose their disability benefit, and it provides many with employment experience they may not have already had the opportunity to obtain.

C Access

Clients using the NRB usually hear of the service through their local Health Board, district nurse, school, sheltered employment centres or through the network of voluntary agencies supporting the disabled community. Employees of the NRB also access clients by visiting educational facilities, contacting health board officials and generally accessing clients when required by family members or care workers. Agencies such as FAS, the NTDI and The Irish Council for People with Disabilities act as a more direct link to the NRB.

D Networking

The NRB is a large government agency with branches nationally and consequently networks at both a national and local level. The NRB, by providing services in training and other information programmes, networks with the Department of Education, The Disability Federation of Ireland, Health Boards, the voluntary sector and through an employers' network. Clients of the NRB who have been successful in locating employment usually maintain links with the NRB via their employer.

E Outcomes and Assessment

The NRB being a government agency seeks to service the needs of the disabled community through funding, occupational guidance services, employer support initiatives and the provision of an information service to users, disabled groups and families caring for the disabled. The organisation provides a forum for access to services that many voluntary groups may not have. There is difficulty in identifying numbers of persons using the service or the NRB because of the access to the service by many disabled groups and voluntary bodies; however, as a core service to the community, individuals have complete access to a service on a continuing basis.

Case study no. 17

The Travellers Visibility Group

The Travellers Visibility Group
155 Comeragh Park
The Glen
Cork
Tel: +353 21 503786
Contact person: Ms. Chrissie O'Sullivan, Centre Manager

A History, context and structure

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The Travellers Visibility Group
155, Comeragh Park
The Glen
Cork
Tel 00 353 21 503786

Ms. Chrissie O'Sullivan

B Functions, Target Groups and Content

The TVG is concerned with issues facing Travellers in Cork and the absence of any community development work within the Travelling community. The organisation has identified issues specifically relevant to the Travellers with whom they are concerned.

The TVG promotes Travellers as a nomadic group, promoting Traveller self-determination and change. Members of this organisation seek to work for a change and improvement in education, health and employment rights and conditions. The TVG seeks to ensure the inclusion of Traveller issues and participation in policy and decision making practices that affect the Travelling community. Through the promotion of a funded resource centre and the training of management, staff and clients of the centre, the TVG aims to promote understanding, respect and mutual support between the Traveller and Settled communities.

Through specific research the TVG has identified 5 main issues facing Travellers which intensify social exclusion:

- Inappropriate accommodation
- Poor access to education
- Chronic health problems
- High dependency on social welfare
- Discrimination at both a personal and institutional level

In terms of combating social exclusion, this organisation recognises changes in the traditional Traveller economy which has become obsolete as a result of changing socio-economic trends; and due to the lack of educational opportunities, many Traveller families cannot source or avail of new opportunities which may exist because of the lack of information, education, knowledge of the socio-economic structures that exist in the Settled community and the strong element of racism and opposition to Traveller families being included in the normal working practices of the Settled community.

In response to this, the TVG has established a number of initiatives aimed at promoting personal development and training for new skills for Traveller women. The Back to Work course for Traveller women, in association with the External Training Division of Fas, was implemented in 1996. This programme was designed as a New Opportunities for Traveller Women and aimed to facilitate Traveller women to make the move from working from home, many for the first time ever. The course also includes a four-week work placement appropriate to the needs of the student.

Through staff training and development programmes, the TVG has been successful in negotiating support from the Department of Social Welfare and therefore allowing the organisation to employ further staff. Training facilities for the management committee include weekend residential courses giving the committee opportunities to clarify and assess the needs and progress of the organisation.

C Access

The TVG facilitates a geographical area of Cork City and County. A majority of the Traveller community in the Cork area is located in the north of the city and has easy physical access to the centre. The Traveller community is a close community and access to the service is usually by word of mouth. Additionally, members of staff with responsibility for the Traveller community, for example the Health Boards, the Department of Social Welfare, Fas and funding supporters of the organisation will highlight its existence.

D Networking

The TVG is affiliated to the Irish Traveller Movement (ITM) and has had a strong representation on its National Taskforce for the Traveller community. Funding agencies such as those mentioned, also involve a networking aspect.

E Outcomes and assessment

The TVG, a group formed by Travellers for Travellers, seeks to access members of the Travelling community and identify methods of improving Traveller life and combat exclusion in the socio-economic environment. Exclusion of Travellers arises through the acknowledgement that there are specific cultural differences between Travellers and Settled persons and generally this community cannot access employment, good health care, adequate accommodation or adequate education. These factors automatically exclude and through the lack of employment in the Settled community, there is a high dependency on social welfare.

Access to guidance and counselling services is poor and specific services, as we know them, do not exist for the Traveller community. Guidance services that any Traveller may access would be through Fas or the Local Employment Service, but services specific to the exact needs of this group do not appear to be available.

Case study no. 18

Pavee Point

Pavee Point
North Great Charles Street
Off Mountjoy Square
Dublin 1
Tel: +353 1 878 0255
Fax: +353 1 874 2626
Opening hours: 9.30am - 5.00pm
Contact: Mr Niall Crowley, Centre Manager

A History, Context and Structure

Pavee Point was established in Dublin as the Dublin Travellers Education and Development Group (DTEG) in 1985. To mark the tenth anniversary and signify changes made during that period, the name "Pavee Point" was adopted in 1995.

Pavee Point is a voluntary or non-government organisation committed to the human rights of Irish Travellers. The group comprises Travellers and members of the majority population working together in partnership to address the needs of Travellers as a minority group who experience exclusion and marginalisation. It is funded by the EU Global Grant for local and urban development and the Eastern Health Board.

B Functions, Target Group and Content

Pavee Point is concerned with targeting Traveller groups and communities and has specific support from Partnership Groups nationally. The organisation has a series of aims designed to improve the lives of Travellers and decrease the incidence of exclusion and marginalisation experienced by this group. Pavee Point seeks to improve the participation, visibility and involvement of this minority group in society. The organisation seeks to influence statutory policy and decision making practices, combat racism and foster solidarity and exchange of experience amongst Traveller communities, design in-service training and capacity building for community-based groups, Traveller groups, voluntary organisations and agencies involved with Travellers. Social exclusion in the context of the Traveller community may be defined in terms of economic, social, political and cultural terms. The Traveller community suffer inequality through racism and inequitable poverty and experience specific racial and cultural discrimination by employers, service providers and members of the Settled community.

Through the organisation's Training Economy Initiative and Community Development Plan, Pavee Point has highlighted the need and potential for the inclusion of Travellers. In local socio-economic development, participation in the Community Development Programme enables the organisation and individuals to co-operate with other projects engaged in a wide range of community initiatives. Pavee Point has commissioned a range of studies designed to identify pathways towards inclusion. Specifically, the organisation looks at ways in which the Travelling Community can become responsible for their own employment within their own community and be accepted as service providers within the Settled community.

"Primary Healthcare for Travellers Project" is an initiative designed to promote the education of Traveller women in health issues and ultimately improve the health of their community by the employment of Traveller women and their families. The "Primary Health Care for Travellers Project" was funded by the Eastern Health Board. The project aimed to:

1. establish a model of Traveller participation in the promotion of health;
2. develop the skills of Traveller women in providing community-based health services;
3. liaise and assist in creating dialogue between Travellers and health service providers in the area;
4. highlight gaps in health service delivery to Travellers in community care areas and work toward reducing inequalities that exist in established services.

The project, having encouraged Traveller women to participate, has identified one of the roles of the Traveller Community Health Worker as having access in order to disseminate health information to the Traveller Community. By encouraging and developing appropriate skills for employment as Health Care workers through the above training initiative. Traveller women are currently being employed by the Eastern Health Board to facilitate and increase Traveller participation in health issues and develop an advocacy role in their community. One of the conclusions highlighted the encouragement given to the Traveller women to represent Traveller issues through this skills related project. Participation in the media has also been an important issue having developed participants communication skills and acting as role models for other Travellers, creating the conditions for Travellers to represent Traveller issues and inclusion in the working environment.

Mary Collins, a Traveller participant in the "Primary Health Care for Travellers Project" commented:

"One of the best things is that the course happened for Travellers. They have given us a great chance. We get up in the morning and look forward to coming in here and because of Pavee Point we have learned to sit and talk with the Settled people. If it wasn't for Pavee Point - we would not be here or have these jobs".

C Access

Traveller communities usually access this service through Pavee Point's network of support and referral from the Partnership group of companies nation-wide. Local voluntary groups and initiatives supporting Traveller issues will also refer to Pavee Point in terms of identifying support or making referrals. Word of mouth is an important vehicle as information provider within this close knit community. Pavee Point also visit and maintain a presence at Traveller sites and promote visits and events targeted at the Traveller community.

D Networking

Pavee Point networks with a range of government agencies involved in participation in various programmes developed by the organisation, for example, the Department of Health and the Eastern Health Board in the promotion of the "Primary Health Care for Travellers Project". Fas plays a role in the provision of specific training services for Traveller youth and Traveller men. The Partnership companies liaise and network with Pavee Point in association with any initiatives developed by Partnership groups nation-wide and have access to Local Employment Service provision.

E Outcomes and Assessment

Committed to the human rights of Travellers, Pavee Point seeks to address the specific needs of Travellers and identify Travellers as a minority group experiencing exclusion and marginalisation. Pavee Point seeks to influence policy decision making regarding the welfare and rights of Travellers but also provides a platform of access to the Traveller community in terms of identifying specific needs and requirements for inclusion in the socio-economic environment.

Traditional sources of employment i.e. trading, recycling and trade in horses have been seriously diminished by government related legislation and a change in economic structure. Pavee Point seeks to identify and promote new areas of employment for Traveller communities as independent service providers i.e. the provision of laundry facilities, banking and flag making, and working as sole traders within the marketplace environment are some examples.

Access to a guidance and counselling service is possible through the Local Employment Services usually attached to Partnerships. Pavee Point does not provide this type of service. However, adequate choices through these resources must be made available and the potential for the provision is very limited, limiting choices for Traveller communities.

Pavee Point promotes a role of advocacy regarding advice and assistance. Thus, the Traveller community are a group identified amongst other things as having specific cultural differences from the Settled community and government services may have to consider this if planning to provide this access to the Traveller community.

Case study no. 19

Tallaght Partnership Ltd

Tallaght Partnership Ltd
Village Green
Tallaght
Dublin 24
Ireland
Tel +353 1 459 0602
Fax +353 1 459 7991
Opening hours: 9.30am - 5.00pm
Contact person: Ms. Anna Lee, Manager

A History, Context and Structure

The Partnership was inaugurated in 19 rum for networks, voluntary
organisations and statutory groups eme . The organisation was
restructured to incorporate the PESP P as a "Bottom Up" initiative to
promote and develop specific strategies unity. There are no branches
to this particular partnership, but it is s ge of organisations already
liaising with the Partnership.

The organisation is funded by the Global Grant for rural development, the International Fund for Ireland and the Department of Enterprise and Employment. The budget allocated to the Partnership through funding is 1.5 million punts.

The geographical area the Partnership focuses on is the Tallaght area alone. The office is located on the high street and is readily accessible to users on a "walk in" basis or by appointment.

B Functions, target groups and content

The Partnership's role within this community is to support local development initiatives and focus upon disadvantage. This focus is of a spatial dimension regarding the geography of this area. There are two aims:

1 To focus on the most disadvantaged groups within the area, i.e. members of the community in the local authority housing.

2 Target specific groups, i.e. women working in the home, persons with disabilities, the Traveller community, and early school leavers and the long-term unemployed.

In terms of social exclusion, the marginalisation and exclusion of these groups is due to difficulty in accessing the normal accepted standards of society. These groups are marginalised at a social, educational and economic level and the Partnership aims to tackle this exclusion by promoting a series of co-operative developments in training and education within the environs of this particular community.

Women in the geographical area of Tallaght are a group of particular interest to the Partnership. There are a significant number of women participating in Community

Employment Schemes and second chance education. The traditional route to academic qualification is one which women suffering exclusion find difficult to overcome. The Universities are inaccessible in terms of travel, finance and childcare. In more recent years, the Partnership has identified courses required and assessed as being of interest to members of the community demonstrating an interest in on-going education and second chance education. For example, the University in Maynooth provides local accessible Diploma courses in social studies and community work and deals with equality issues. The National College Of Ireland also provides local courses leading to recognised and accredited qualifications. At present, there are plans to provide an external taught BA locally by the University, this providing a positive stepping stone within second chance education to third level.

Significantly, although women participate to a greater extent in Community Employment Schemes and second chance education, they are very poorly represented in the enterprise and employment strategies.

In an effort to combat this, the Tallaght Partnership has teamed up with the Tallaght New Opportunities For Women (NOW) group and developed the Women Entering Business (WEB) programme. A significant element of this initiative was to consider the obstacles and barriers preventing women from entering business and to develop innovative approaches and strategies in a direct and practical manner. The general aim of WEB evolved as a linked system of action areas involving series of promotions and seminars, "women-focused" enterprise information, a pre-enterprise training programme, professional up-skilling for enterprise programme, in-training support services and modular business skills as an example.

The impact of the WEB initiative has been one of significant progress. Participants have gained increased confidence, business competence and skills, with high numbers progressing through WEB to self-employment. In terms of the local community, increased numbers of women are seeking information and exploring enterprise options and training with service agencies. There is an increased awareness of women's enterprise potential and new support structures have evolved, for example, a greatly enhanced knowledge of financial and other key business supports through being well informed and individually tutored in their practical applications for finance and other resources. Participants' positive response to the course has been high, as illustrated by comments from trainees such as:

> "We got two employment grants from the County Enterprise Board. We would never have heard about this Board or been able to link into it if WEB had not told us about it."
>
> "It has been really good to hear about the experiences of women who are already doing business. I was going into partnership and was able to learn from another woman in the group who also operated a Partnership Agreement. I got advice on the right sort of business agreement."

The Partnership recognises the difficulties women face in relation to the caring role with childcare and accessing employment through childcare facilities. Tallaght Partnership has introduced a strong childcare policy with the provision of a crèche for clients of the centre and an after school care facility and priority is given to funding childcare where possible.

C Access

Accessing most groups is possible through effective outreach strategies, through Fas centres and the Local Employment Services office and other agencies such as the Tallaght NOW. The Partnership emphasises the necessity of designing an effective outreach strategy for groups or individuals reluctant to participate and targeting individuals with a negative experience of education or training and development strategies.

The Partnership being located on the high street, it serves the community as a "one-stop-shop" also.

D Networking

The Tallaght Partnership liaises with the Local Employment Service and refers clients to the guidance and counselling facility available. The WEB. initiative incorporates guidance and counselling facility as part of its progression route and has also forged routes into other external support systems. These include organisations such as: Get Tallaght Working, Fas, Cert, Institute of Technology Tallaght , South Dublin County Enterprise Board, Tallaght Trust Fund, First Step, Plato Programme and South Dublin Chamber Of Commerce.

Many of these organisations co-operate with each other in the support of programmes and the development of the community of which the Tallaght Partnership has a particular brief and expertise.

E Outcomes and assessment

It is not possible to quantify the users of the service each week, as many people call to the centre with informal queries and very many more are participating in initiatives supported by the Partnership around the geographical area of Tallaght. In terms of the WEB programme, over 600 women have benefited from various aspects of the course and over 40 women have completed comprehensive business plans, with 15 receiving grant aid. By providing a forum for women at the Tallaght Partnership, this particular group is currently benefiting from active support in childcare facilities, ongoing education, training and immersion in the enterprise culture. There is a "bottom up" initiative to promote the independence and confidence of the individual through tailor made initiatives.

Case study no. 20

Local Employment Service (LES)

Local Employment Service (LES)
Togher
Cork
Tel: +353 21 320428
Fax: +353 21 320429
Opening hours: 9.00am - 5.00pm
Contact person: Ms Breda Long, Co-ordinator

LES. Greenwood Estate
Togher
Cork

Tel 00-353-21-320428
Fax 00-353-21-320429

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The government Department of Enterprise and Employment has responsibility for the LES service and is advised by an Interdepartmental Advisory Group (IAG) and a Policy Advisory Committee (LESPAC). Local LES services are supervised by a management committee and local Area Partnership Companies act as a catalyst and sponsor. In the case of Togher, the Cork City Partnership acts as provider of Active Network, support and developer of the LES process.

Togher LES employs a co-ordinator/mediator, two administrators and an employment liaison officer. The Department of Enterprise and Employment fund the centre via the local Area Partnership committee. The Togher office is located in an area traditionally suffering high unemployment and is situated within a housing estate, where clients can easily access the service, where it is located next to a local shop and hairdresser.

B Functions, target groups and content

The LES provides a focal point of access for unemployed people to identify a range of initiatives and information designed to assist their return or re-entry to the labour market. The service encompasses guidance and counselling facilities, training, education and employment support via local employer networks to facilitate the client. The Task Force also envisages the LES as providing a provision of service, in areas deficient at present to the unemployed, such as:

- an effective guidance & counselling service
- correction of the information deficit
- comprehensive registration service & data base
- active placement service to liaise with employers

- after placement assistance service
- a planned progression path
- effective co-ordination services

Most importantly, anyone unemployed for a period of six months or more can access the LES service. All service provision, i.e. information, mediation (guidance and counselling), employers and training support, is generally available. The ethos within the Togher LES focuses upon a customer service proviso with a relaxed accommodating and professional atmosphere as being most important. Staff are friendly and non-judgmental, and as clients are generally accessing the service on a voluntary basis they have the assurance of complete confidentiality; so the initial response has been good.

The Co-ordinator/mediator provides a "walk in" or if necessary an appointment system for clients. Each client is given as much time as needed and assessment of potential requirements of the client directs him/her to a specific route toward employment or a range of options for consideration. This is a factor of prime importance to staff at LES Togher and aspects of the service are tailor made to the client. Staff are very conscious that clients accessing the service do so voluntarily and not under duress by other Government agencies, welfare bodies etc.

Target groups accessing the Togher LES are referrals made by the NRB, lone parents, ex-offenders and early school leavers. Each group has differing and specific requirements demanding differing services and advice. Many ex-offenders have great difficulty in preparation of a CV for example and their job search and social skills are usually very poor. Support in the placement of ex-offenders in Community Employment Schemes or with employers is a priority within this particular group. Accessing further training for early school leavers is not a reality as it is perceived as being just another facet of 2nd level education where many clients may have failed to progress.

Practical assessment of the client's requirements equates to differing solutions or routes for progression toward employment. Ms. Long makes the point that many clients lack basic vocational and social skills, which automatically preclude employment. An initiative to promote practical solutions to training specific groups of long-term unemployed include training clients in commercial driving skills. This scheme has assisted individuals in the basic skills related to driving and by acquiring their driving licence, this has automatically opened up opportunities for vacancies such as warehouse/forklift support, goods delivery and other commercial driving activities. This initiative has been welcomed by clients requiring a skills related training which provides a tangible outcome.

The Togher LES is often the first port of call for many clients. Many clients have great difficulty with agencies of authority and require a facilitative empowering environment as opposed to mandatory attendance of employment support courses.

C Access

Access to this service is often by referral by the Area Partnership company, community development agencies, Fas and the government welfare agencies. Advertising is purposely non-aggressive with the basis of approach being voluntary. Advertisements have been placed in local newspapers such as the Togher Times, but work of mouth is a key method of accessing groups and individuals and one which the Togher LES prefers & welcomes.

The service is free, welcoming and accessed in a drop-in basis. The office is situated within a housing estate experiencing high unemployment and is next to shops and the local hairdresser. There is no porch area or hostile access, which means clients can view the internal layout prior to access. The office is warm and welcoming with a seating area adjacent to the administrator/receptionist. Clients using the service by phone or in person were given a quick and courteous response by either the administrator or co-ordinator.

D Networking

A management committee composed of a group of representatives from various sectors of the labour market supports the Togher LES. To this end, the Togher networks with the Cork City Partnership, local employers, Fas network and local community development programmes. The employment liaison officer also provides a direct link with employers and promotes the network support between employers anxious to support such schemes for the excluded. On occasion where the networking has become formal in the case of presentations made by the LES, attendance can be disappointing. Consequently, a low key approach to networking is in many cases adopted where potential employers and supporters of the service can establish a relationship with employees of the service.

E Outcomes and assessment

The LES service is a service arising out of the recognition that current facilities and approaches to tackling those individuals suffering long-term unemployment are not successful. There are many training programmes and development initiatives available to those suffering social exclusion, but a great proportion of those suffering exclusion or at risk of social exclusion, are not accessing these services.

The LES is the only such service which provides an active and supportive environment for facilitating the guidance and counselling service required by those requiring long-term support and mediation. The service, being placed in areas suffering from deprivation located beside community areas such as shopping facilities, offers clients the opportunity to avail of a "walk-in" or "drop-in" facility. Many individuals are suspicious of government services and having had poor experiences of education, training initiatives or even employment, may be reluctant or unable to access other services deemed to be more formal and difficult to access.

Candidates accessing this service are given the opportunity to spend time in identifying and sourcing information and support needed to assist their return to the work place. The LES has the facility to incorporate a range of solutions designed and tailor made for the client and, with the support of networks such as the Area Partnership companies, Fas and an employers liaison group, is in a favourable position to provide the mentoring and guidance service required by the client.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In an expert interview with Ms. Mary Linehan of the Cork City Area Partnership, Ms. Linehan comments on the current provision of adult vocational guidance and counselling services in Ireland as being

> "a system of services via non integrated agencies, a system with no comprehensive service"

This comment supports observations that in Ireland there are many training and community based initiatives designed to encourage and attract the socially excluded members of our society to the work place, but many of these organisations are separate and work independently of each other, depend upon funding support, local maintenance grants and quota systems to maintain their existence.

The National Centre For Guidance In Education in a recent report by Dr. Gerry McNamara also includes the following comment by Keogh in 1996 (NCGE/NICEC 1998) to support this view and comments on the provision for adult educational guidance in Ireland thus:

> Educational guidance in Ireland is provided free of charge, state-funded and supported, in some cases, by the European Social Fund. Access to guidance for adults is limited in the case of those on full-time courses and virtually non-existent for those on part-time courses. Delivery is via many providers, described largely as "enthusiastic amateurs". Provision is fragmented, of inconsistent quality and there is a great deal of competition among providers. But, on the positive side, there are a number of largely ad hoc initiatives aimed at improving the quality of guidance, for example through in-service and post-graduate training. There is growing recognition of the need for training.... (NCGE/NICEC 1998a, p. 24).

In the absence of a statutory provision of agency supporting all initiatives designed to assist the socially excluded and encourage the cohesion and integration of services, Dr. McNamara cites the current provision of guidance as being divided into the following sectors:

- Core state services - principally second and third level schools and colleges, VECs, VTOS and Fas, Department of Family and Social Affairs and the Local Employment Services (LES)
- State resources services - such as Community Development Projects, County Enterprise Boards, Citizen and Youth Information Centres, Area Partnership Companies etc.
- Community and voluntary sector services - non-commercial charitable, issue-focused or locally based organisations such as AONTAS, the INOU or SIPTU (trade union)
- Market-provided services - commercially-based professional guidance and placement agencies
- Other services- libraries, the media, trade unions, in-company services etc.

Each agency has differing objectives nationally within the community, but collectively these groups assume a brief to assist the socially excluded in accessing the labour market in developing various training related and community based initiatives designed to access those individuals suffering from social exclusion. There is no single system of provision for adult guidance and provision for guidance is "by a wide range of state, community and voluntary organisations and tends to be an add-on, peripheral element to their original educational and training responsibilities" (NCGE/NICEC 1998b).

When interviewed, the general consensus by service providers is the need to establish a core service for clients to access training and development initiatives which will give greater access to the work place.

The main conclusions from an evaluation of services interviewed is:

- Lack of national policy on guidance and counselling.
- Fragmentation and lack of cohesion of services available and general confusion by clients about what service is available and suitable for their specific needs.
- There are a large number of services available but there is little focus thus far on guidance and counselling, although the need has been reinforced by all groups interviewed.
- Guidance and counselling needs to be viewed as a process rather than a one off intervention prior to or during training.
- Guidance and counselling services available are in many cases limited to users of training related courses and counselling is directed at this specific group and very dependent upon access to funding. Organisations being funded driven inhibits development and planning strategy.
- Little or no training is available for staff in these organisations on implementing the process of guidance and counselling.
- Childcare and care of the elderly remains an issue for many of those who are excluded and is often the real barrier to participation.
- Current access to service providers is often too formal for those suffering social exclusion. Many individuals suffering exclusion have serious literacy and numeracy problems and having had very negative experiences of formal structures of education, will not access current providers.
- For Travellers and disabled persons in particular the inflexibility and inappropriateness of many state and semi-state agencies' programmes and policies, in particular the design of training programmes and other development interventions, do not accommodate their specific needs.
- Access to many training initiatives which house a guidance and counselling service is restricted to individuals meeting certain requirements or quota systems and therefore access to guidance is limited to the target group and not available to others seeking guidance.
- Fas, the National Training Agency, is the major funding instrument for services.
- Persons residing in rural areas have difficulty accessing information or guidance facilities due to the lack of outreach services and the lack of transport available to them to access such services, which may be available in urban areas.
- Persons suffering disability have the added problem of physical access and many of the agencies providing information and guidance are inaccessible to the disabled although the NRB have a specific occupational guidance service which attempts to target users both in urban and rural areas.

One of the main difficulties of access for users of any guidance and counselling provider in Ireland is the confusion and lack of cohesion of services on offer. The delivery of guidance and counselling in Ireland is via many providers and currently the structure of guidance and counselling facilities for the socially excluded involves a system of unstructured services lacking a cohesive strategy and being funded in the short term in many instances by Fas, the National Training and Development agency.

Upon interviewing many of these service providers and involving experts currently involved in the delivery of guidance and counselling in Ireland and also those involved in policy making decisions, the general consensus regarding the problem of cohesion of services has been a recommendation for a core or central service which has specific responsibility for adult guidance in Ireland. The lack of integration or cohesion of services has lent itself to difficulties for both service providers and more notably for users. The lack of cohesion has led to suspicion of services, difficulty of access due to lack of information and a reluctance to access formal state or semi-state organisations.

RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING ACCESS

The establishment of a central or core service with responsibility for the provision of:

- Promotion of a decentralised service with responsibility for the integration and cohesiveness of current providers.
- Policy formulation to support the establishment of accurate and comprehensive information in all providers.
- Promotion of training and development of staff.
- Control of funding and redirection of funding for target groups and providers.
- Responsibility for upskilling existing services and providers.
- Introduction of an **Irish National Guidance Initiative** as proposed by the NCGE.

Many experts and interviewees have commented on the difficulty of access relating to the formal structures currently in place within many of the services. Current structures providing guidance and counselling to clients require change and the following recommendations have been made:

- Deformalise the structures of access.
- Provide a skills/vocational related long-term support model of guidance.
- Promote a community development model of guidance and counselling.
- Reintroduce the apprenticeship model of training related guidance and counselling.
- Formulate a best practice policy according to target group including the introduction of non formal guidance in communities where individuals seek peer support and long-term mentoring support.
- The promotion of easier access to adult education with a portable modular system of education.

Difficulties of access also relate to the problems associated with child care and care of the elderly, difficulties facing the disabled in terms of accessing facilities and persons living in rural areas.

- The provision of adequate care facilities for both the elderly, disabled and children of persons at risk of social exclusion.
- The provision of a network of outreach services for those living in rural areas and unable to access such services due to health, care and travel restrictions.

- Location of services in accessible buildings for the disabled and provision of a specific service to meet the needs of disabled groups and also provision which is specific to the needs of Traveller groups.

The provision of such a core service could provide the many organisations currently involved in the delivery of guidance in Ireland with the much-needed policy driven approach, create a model for best practice and provide the forum to encourage a cohesive and structures approach to policy and practice. Such a core service according to M. Linehan of the Cork City Partnership should be a service where adults must have focus and where a centre or forum will take responsibility for overseeing current services and advocate a decentralised service to encourage existing service providers to self manage and "skill-up" existing services.

This model is also supported by Ms. A. Jordan of Integra, who recommends that there is a need for an integrated educational guidance service for adults which would look for "new ways to work in partnership with the target group, to seek more flexibility within existing education and training provision and to assist in facilitating the process of development". In a recent survey by Integra in the South East of Ireland the following recommendations were made in terms of what the respondents required of a guidance service:

There is a need for a:

- good central guidance service
- access to accurate and comprehensive information
- integration of existing services and local education and training providers
- services which are accessible to all and impartial, focused upon the individual and acting as a "one stop shop" with supportive funding

Such a core service would make provision for all groups of adults suffering social exclusion and through such a forum would act as the cohesive structure in integrating many of the services and make these more easily accessible to users. Also, identifying the methods and services currently accessing specific target groups and users and assisting these services with ongoing support, funding and training advice, current providers may also use such an agency for ongoing advice, support and information provider in conjunction with others in the region.

Staff Training

There is little or no provision for the training of staff who are currently involved in the provision of guidance and counselling in Ireland. Whilst many organisations prefer that potential providers have a primary degree and hold a post graduate diploma in guidance and counselling, this is not a statutory requirement and there are huge discrepancies in the formal qualifications held by providers.

Recommendations regarding staff training vary according to some of the experts commenting, but generally there has been a call for:

- "Skilling up" existing providers
- Providing further training in the provision of informal guidance training for staff and participants and exploring the further training of volunteers already involved in the provision of informal guidance and counselling at community level.
- Promotion of staff management and development, through the central/core service or forum of responsibility.

Employers' Requirements
In Ireland, the emphasis has been upon the formality of education and qualifications as prerequisites to gaining employment and being considered for further training and education. More recently, employer's organisations have differing requirements of potential candidates and make the following recommendations:

- They seek skilled, flexible and able individuals with good communication and personal skills
- Employers advise the promotion of personal development and customer related social skills with a degree of flexibility and ability by the individual to cope with day to day job requirements.
- There is a requirement for skilled linguists and employers' organisations have already instituted language programmes for persons suffering unemployment in an attempt to reskill and address such a skills shortage.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICYMAKERS AND FUNDERS

Provision
There is an increasing recognition that there is a growing need for a dedicated adult guidance and counselling service both within and outside the education sector. According to Dr. Gerry McNamara it is clear **"that development of adult educational guidance must take place within the framework of a clear national policy based on detailed adult guidance needs and on structures of adult education in Ireland".**

The requirements of the adult population and specifically the socially excluded must be considered in the context of their requirements. The role of guidance and counselling will differ from that of young persons and those already participating in the employment and further education structure. The NCGE report emphasises that the adult population is a diverse group with diverse requirements of an educational guidance service. The responsibilities upon many adults will place specific constraints on the ability to access not only in geographical terms but also in that most guidance services are offered only in traditional settings and timetabled for young people.

In dealing with the development of a policy for a guidance and counselling service for adults, the report by the NCGE cites the following as key elements of a national policy on adult educational guidance.

- **flexibility**: to encompass the wide range of adult needs
- **local availability**: to allow for locally differing requirements and to ensure ease of access by adult learners hampered by geographical restrictions
- **ongoing guidance:** the availability of ongoing guidance in third level colleges, including post-education guidance
- **autonomy:** maintaining the autonomy of guidance services
- **quality standards:** the putting in place on quality standards, including practitioner standards (guidance qualifications)
- **proactive system:** the need for a proactive system in order to draw in those least likely to avail of guidance (who tend to be those with the greatest need of such a service)
- **networking:** the networking of professional organisations in the area of adult guidance and hence development of referral systems and market intelligence

The NCGE supports the development of such a service and comment that educational guidance for adults has the potential to outweigh social disadvantage, based on a well designed infrastructure and delivering a responsive, proactive service.

The provision of such a service to combat social exclusion must consider the difficulties facing some of those experiencing exclusion on a long-term basis. Provision of service must relate to the particular needs and specific requirements of not only the target group but also the individual. Negative experience of education and the inability to access formal structures by many automatically exclude, as does the difficulty with literacy and numeracy experienced by many long-term unemployed. Adequate consideration of a community based model of guidance and counselling coupled with the development of a skills/vocational-related approach of long-term support and mentoring by member of their community may be a consideration.

Target groups require differing approaches to guidance and counselling. For example, members of the Traveller community have differing requirements and will, because of their heritage and history, require different outcomes to such guidance and counselling. There is a specific need for suppliers to have practitioners trained specifically to the needs of the Traveller community for example.

The role of advocacy should not go unrecognised as a means of meeting a successful conclusion to the requirements of some individuals.

Funding
Too often current providers are dependent upon short-term funding and are only able to provide a crisis type of service. There are many organisations providing excellent services to the socially excluded but most cease to exist due to the absence of funding

Consequently, there is difficulty in maintaining a long-term commitment to individuals participating and experts have called upon funding providers to decentralise funding and redistribute such funds to a central or core service with the ability to manage it for future support and professional development of new and existing services.

Strategies
Experts believe that the introduction of a central or core service and national strategy for guidance and counselling provision for adults would identify areas for future funding, training and professional development of a service dedicated to lifelong learning and the personal development of individuals.

Introducing such a service to persons at risk of social exclusion or currently suffering social exclusion must incorporate and consider the group, and indeed individuals differing requirements and needs. Each adult will already be constrained by specific restraints for example, domestic or educational. A system of provision must dedicate itself to the needs of the adult population and then the differing requirements of that population. Consequently, differing models of careers guidance and counselling may be introduced to meet the needs of specific individuals.

The introduction of a strategy for the training of providers, adequate funding to ensure the continuity of current providers and the professional development of such services and the incorporation of varying models of guidance and counselling for consideration, would identify areas for further provision and continuity.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The difficulties facing those suffering social exclusion seeking guidance and counselling tend to concentrate on the area of confusion and lack of information of services and what is available and suitable for the individual. Many of the current service providers are funded by the state or semi-state organisations and users are often suspicious and concerned about accessing such formal structures due to misinformation, lack of confidence regarding personal qualifications and inability to access due to physical disability, lack of care support and in the case of the Traveller community, the perception that such services are not useful or specific to their general requirements.

Current provision being fragmented emphasises the need for a central or core service with the responsibility to support current and existing services in terms of professional training and development, the diversion of funding to supporting existing target groups seeking funding for continuity of service, and the introduction and implementation of a national policy on guidance and counselling to promote and support differing models of guidance for differing requirements of the adult population with an emphasis on those suffering or at risk of social exclusion.

Some experts deem current statutory training initiatives with responsibility for guidance and counselling interviewed to be too technical and non-vocational. Individuals suffering from difficulties associated with literacy and numeracy problems suffer poor self esteem and low levels of confidence and require a supportive long-term practical skills related personal programme of retraining and support. Only the very motivated individuals suffering social exclusion or at risk of social exclusion will access the current range of services which are based upon formal structures, whilst a certain percentage of individuals disadvantaged at local levels may not be accessed by any of the services.

Ms. Eleanor Spears, director of the Educational Guidance Service for Adults in Belfast, notes that " difficulty with basic literacy will automatically exclude" - EGSA believes that education is central to inclusion and these levels of literacy are fundamental to continued exclusion of the adult client. The trade union SIPTU supports the above conclusion and comments that the main difficulties faced by the disadvantaged members of the Trade Union may be identified as poor levels of literacy and numeracy, poor academic record with most individuals having a very negative experience of education. In many cases, difficulty with numeracy and literacy is coupled by poor self esteem, little or no support by peers to access assistance with guidance or further education and lack of social skills required by many employers to access the first hurdle toward employment.

The Department of Family and Social Affairs confirms the above difficulties by recognising that whilst the Department actively supports the reintegration of persons in receipt of welfare benefit to varying education strategies, the uptake and general access to this initiative is poor. Many of the recipients have poor social skills, difficulty with literacy and numeracy and lack basic skills such as letter writing, telephone technique, being able to drive, use a computer and lack the discipline of managing time and a structured approach toward accessing support and further employment possibilities.

In an attempt to access those excluded by literacy or numeracy problems, SIPTU and the Department of Family and Social Affairs support the introduction of a community based model of guidance and counselling, where individuals have constant support and counselling at a local level, with members of their own community providing the assistance, trust and confidential long-term support necessary to encourage those excluded to involve themselves in further education and learning strategies.

The Cork City Area Partnership group in the North side of Cork City as part of a PETRA initiative developed this strategy of non-formal guidance provision. Active members of the community were approached and, in conjunction with University College Cork, participated in a training programme designed to facilitate a non formal guidance and counselling service to members of their community requiring support, encouragement and impartial advice. Mary Linehan, director of the Cork City Area Partnership, proposes a service which provides a non formal, non threatening environment of support for vocational guidance and counselling and accessing clients through word of mouth, friends, outreach initiatives and home school liaison projects which deal directly with adults already suffering social exclusion.

A mentoring type of approach to guidance and counselling of individuals is being considered as a more effective alternative to structured services offering guidance and counselling such as for example the LES, Fas or the Partnership groups. Individuals suffering social exclusion already have difficulties accessing such organisations if only because of their poor expectations, lack of motivation or lack of confidence. The mentor/role model scenario in these cases would appear to be more acceptable. A long history of exclusion or marginalisation within a family and also community brings with it its own suspicions of state services to the unemployed.

The importance of re-developing strong and concentrated links with communities is seen as an important method of accessing individuals suffering disadvantage and exclusion and also provides the "hands on" approach favoured by many as a means of demonstrating success or impact of any particular initiative in the immediate locality or community. Also the specific requirements of each community may differ and therefore the requirements of individuals also. Possibly a tailor-made approach to individual directional assistance may become operational through some form of advisory mentoring system. The Local Employment Service offices (LES) have instigated a mentoring type of approach to case load management and will provide the individual with the long-term access to support when required.

Experts involved in provision recognise that a multifaceted approach required to support encourage individuals suffering social exclusion or at risk of social exclusion and is important in the development of guidance and counselling provision in Ireland.

Many individuals have become ghettoised in terms of training support initiatives and are slow to access the LES and Fas schemes; many training initiatives are considered extreme and lack a supportive, practical and vocational element. Young males have no role models of success in the labour market and many persons have a poor experience of employment structures due to a lack of discipline. Individuals living in an area of traditional unemployment and experiencing generations of unemployment are automatically stigmatised by employers and other representatives.

SIPTU recognises that encouragement should be given to creating a half way house approach to guidance and counselling and training support initiatives where there is a practical approach to reskilling and vocational training coupled with a scheme of literacy and numeracy education supported by a personal development/social skills module. In the light of this poor experience by many individuals suffering exclusion in the formal education system and being unable to access the labour market, re-education and reskilling should encompass a sympathetic, vocational and practical approach to the basics required of each person in the labour market.

The reintroduction of the apprenticeship model of training and reskilling could be a model for consideration. The practical skills training as a "hands on" experience of working within the discipline of an employer coupled with block breaks of practical literacy and numeracy and specifically the teaching of the "3-Rs" supported by a social skills training dedicated to the individual requirements is seen as possible answer to the type of "sheltered" training individuals may require instead of the technical extremes of current training models.

Given the problems cited in accessing various services, many believe that there must be a supportive and multi-directional approach to servicing the needs of specific groups. Consequently, in terms of providing access to services there has been a recommendation to deformalise guidance and counselling services and incorporate a community based model of service,

Typically the barriers to accessing such services are related to the lack of information and ability to source the information readily, but for many individuals and especially women, the chronic lack of childcare facilities and facilities or support for the care of the elderly excludes and provides no choice regarding further personal development.

Few services interviewed provided crèche or care facilities to support the participation of carers in the guidance or training process. Typically, there is no funding available to support the cost of childcare for many and women although keen to access further information or training are unable to do so due to the lack of basic care arrangements.

The Tallaght Partnership in an attempt to address this problem has provided a crèche facility for individuals accessing their facilities and an after school care programme for school going children of participating individuals. In answer to this initiative, the response to the many programmes available to women has been good and many participants have been able to progress to varying degrees due to this support.

Carers, especially in rural areas, are at an added disadvantage due to an obvious lack of care support and the added problem of little or no public transport available to them. Access to any information is limited and these are the immediate barriers to accessing guidance or counselling facilities available.

IRD Duhallow, an organisation focused upon the requirements of the farming community, have developed a range of services designed to inform, and retrain in some instances, members of this community at possible risk of social exclusion. Farming practices are changing and members of this community must cope with these changes and lack of substantial employment. Many women, traditionally working as part of the farm and in the home, are now seeking alternative employment and seek to participate in the many training and development initiatives made available by IRD.

The provision of an outreach service by IRD is one method of accessing those involved in a carers role or isolated by lack of transport in this rural area. Information and guidance support is brought to the individual or small groups in each area and encouragement to access the many courses and initiatives provided is always available

Similarly, persons suffering from disability have immediate barriers in relation to the physical difficulty of accessing the offices and buildings housing current services. Additionally, being disabled and living in a rural area will always automatically exclude unless family members or friends provide a definite and integrative approach to overcoming these barriers to access.

The Disabled Drivers Association in Co Mayo was established to provide the disabled with the opportunity to learn to drive and become more mobile and have a greater quality of life and ability to access more facilities. The training is free of charge and is residential with building facilities specific to the needs of disabled residents. Furthermore, this organisation houses a sister organisation within the same building designed to provide training for disabled in information technology with a view to encouraging trainees to access employment suitable to their specific needs or requirements. Ultimately, persons suffering from disability have access to driving tuition and/or the facility to participate in a residential training programme designed to provide further access to education, training or possible employment.

Access to many training and development initiatives depends upon a quota or welfare based system and many persons may not have access to this provision as they do not meet the requirements of such training or benefit related admission. The inflexibility and in many cases the inappropriateness of many training programmes available serve to discourage many from continuing training or even accessing this training initially and the lack of continuity of training or development is also an issue.

CHAPTER FOUR

ACCESS TO VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

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In this chapter we include a statistical review of social exclusion and an outline of lifelong learning and guidance initiatives in the United Kingdom, but with an additional and more detailed focus on Scotland, where the bulk of the research was carried out. Scotland is a particularly useful area for study, partly because of the existence of great disadvantage and partly because of its policies on adult vocational guidance. Because policy is developing rapidly, we have had to halt our research in the summer of 1998.

The case studies were drawn mainly from Scotland. The main criteria for selection were their focus on one or more groups at risk of social exclusion and good practice or innovative ideas concerning enhancing access. Finally, the recommendations are based on an analysis of interviews with a range of experts, the case studies, the literature and team discussions.

SOCIAL EXCLUSION IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

The focus here is on people aged between 16 and 65 who are at a disadvantage in the labour market, either through unemployment or ill-paid precarious employment. When reference is made to groups at risk of social exclusion or at a disadvantage in the labour market, it is not implied that all members of these groups inevitably suffer disadvantage, but that they have a greater than average likelihood of this. Such groups include the poor, the unemployed, women, the disabled, ethnic minorities, refugees and the homeless. These are the target groups chosen by the United Kingdom team for the purpose of reviewing vocational guidance provision and its accessibility.

Poverty

Poverty in the United Kingdom is defined in various ways. One definition (used by the previous government) applies to those who have only 50 per cent or less of the national mean income, including monetary social transfers (Scottish Poverty Information Unit 1997). By this definition, 23.0 per cent of all households in the United Kingdom were in poverty in 1993, compared with 24 per cent in Greece, 29 per cent in Portugal but only 9 per cent in Denmark. 12,805,000 people were estimated to be living in poor households, including 3,859,000 children under 16 (the worst figure in the EU). An estimated 18 million people (from a population of 57.5 million) are in receipt of some form of public-funded income-replacement support, leading Macfarlane (1997) to estimate that around 30 per cent of the population of all ages suffer economic and social exclusion. These include people whose retirement pension requires supplementing; this is therefore an indicator of past poverty as well as of present.

53 per cent of lone parents, with children under 16, were living in poverty, as were 40 per cent of couples with three or more children (compared with the EU average of 23

per cent). At the same time, the size of the social security budget needed to maintain disadvantaged people at a minimum standard of living restricts the resources that could be deployed in positive action.

Unemployment in the United Kingdom

Despite recent improvements unemployment is still a major problem. Of particular concern is the 84 per cent increase in long-term unemployment between 1991 and 1994, compared with only a 13 per cent rise in total unemployment in that period. Unemployment is a problem above all to those who suffer it and to their families, and it has made a major contribution to the rise in poverty and inequality seen in the United Kingdom since 1979.

In the United Kingdom there have been two basic ways of defining unemployment:

a) the number recorded as unemployed at government offices. The number of claimant unemployed since 1980 has varied between 2 million and almost 3 million. The figures are subject to distortions due to frequent changes in the rules and, moreover, does not take into account unemployed people who do not register.

b) the International Labour Organisation (ILO) definition used by the Labour Force Survey (LSF). The LSF asks individuals whether they have a job and, if not, whether they would like one. This method has the advantage of not being affected by benefit rule changes but has the disadvantage of being a sample survey. Nevertheless both measures show the same broad trends and levels. The ILO measure, which has been adopted by the present government, is used here except where otherwise stated. Not only is it more accurate than the claimant count, it is also close to the measure used by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The LFS is thought, however, to underestimate the number of discouraged workers, that is, people who had not sought work in the four weeks prior to the interview because, although they would like to have a job and were available for work, they believed that there were no jobs available (Training 2000 (Scotland):1992).

Unemployment does not strike impartially. Those generally most likely to be unemployed are:

- people living in Northern Ireland, Wales, Scotland and the North of England
- young people
- men made redundant late in their working life
- those with no or low qualifications
- ethnic minorities: Blacks (people of Caribbean and African origin), who suffer the highest long-term unemployment rates; and Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, who have the highest overall unemployment rate. The White rates are very much lower.
- refugees and those seeking refugee status, whatever their qualifications
- the homeless
- men - in all age groups United Kingdom women's ILO unemployment rates are lower than men's. Nevertheless, the proportion of the claimant unemployed who are women has risen fairly steadily from around 14 per cent in 1971 to nearly 24 per cent in September 1994, reflecting their greater participation in the labour force.
- disabled people, whether with physical, psychological or learning disabilities
- lone parents, most of whom are women

Those most likely to be in ill-paid, precarious and often part-time employment are women. Whereas part-time employment is largely a matter of choice for women with domestic and/or caring responsibilities, poor quality employment is more often due to the inferior qualifications and access to training which characterise women to a greater extent than men.

Women

Economic activity is very high among British women, at 52.4 per cent, and they constitute almost half the paid workforce, albeit about a quarter work part-time. In one important respect, however, women enter employment in some of the most adverse circumstances in the EU in one important respect: despite the steady rise in the number of children under five attending school, cheap and affordable provision for children under three is still extremely poor.

The Out-of-School Childcare Grant Initiative pilot scheme was aimed at helping parents of school-age children (in practice, mainly women) return to the labour market, extend their working hours or undertake education and training. Forty Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs) in England were selected to pilot the scheme in 1993-4, which was evaluated between November 1993 and May 1994. One discovery made by the evaluation team was the TECs' lack of experience of and, in some cases, of commitment to childcare. Some TECs would not have developed bids without the influence of local authorities and existing childcare organisations, and the tensions between the business-oriented approach of the TECs and the social dimensions of childcare have serious implications for the establishment of such schemes in deprived areas. Employers were also reluctant to get involved (Sanderson et al 1995). These factors do not engender much optimism about enabling women, particularly disadvantaged women, to return to work or to upgrade their skills.

It is notable, nevertheless, how determined many women are to overcome this particular barrier, as the aftermath of a similar scheme in Glasgow shows:

> Demand for childcare support provided for parents taking up training, education or work was over-subscribed ... (but) all of the people who had returned to work using the support continued to stay in work after the full childcare costs became their responsibility (Gorbals Initiative 1996/7 Annual Report).

Another problem for women needing childcare is that they earn less than men, as Table 1 shows:

Table 1. Average hourly and weekly earnings of full-time employees, by sex, United Kingdom, 1996

	Pence per hour	Pounds per week	Average hours worked per week	Average earned from overtime
Men	939	391.6	42	48
Women	750	283.0	38	17
Pay gap (%)	80	72	n/a	n/a

Source: Equal Opportunities Commission, Briefings on Women and Men in Britain: Pay (1997)

The average hourly pay gap has narrowed from 71 per cent in 1975 to 80 per cent in 1996. On the other hand, the difference in hourly earnings between women who work part-time and men who work full-time has remained virtually unchanged. A major reason for the pay gap is that men and women tend to be employed in different sectors (in particular, women outnumber men in the relatively poorly-paid public sector) but even when men and women are employed in the same occupation, men's average earnings are almost always higher. Of the 40 per cent of workers in Scotland earning less than two-thirds of the average male wage and the 23.5 per cent earning below half-median male earnings of £4.42 per hour in 1996, the majority are women (Scottish Low Pay Unit 1996).

A subsidiary reason for women's lower pay is that, although in educational attainment women are now overtaking men, as a whole they are significantly less well qualified[20], as shown in table 2.

Table 2. Qualified 'manpower' by sex, as percentage of usually resident population: 10% sample, Great Britain: percentages of all in sample

	1981			1991		
	Men	Women	All	Men	Women	All
% qualified	11.50	8.10	9.70	15.54	11.55	13.45

Adapted from Office of Population Censuses & Surveys/Registrar General Scotland (1984 and 1994). Census 1981 and 1991: Qualified Manpower

Some women carry, in effect, social disabilities. It is estimated that in the United Kingdom there are 1,242,480 lone parents with dependent children[21]. This constitutes 8.12 per cent of families[22]. The estimates for Strathclyde are 11.03 per cent and for Glasgow 15.85 per cent. Over 90 per cent of lone parents are women and well over half of these live on social security benefits, unable to access employment because of lack of help with childcare and inability to access adequately-paid jobs. Of those lone parents in Scotland receiving Family Credit (a benefit available to people in work but on low incomes) in 1995, 97.4 per cent were women.

Disabled people

The 1991 Census asked whether respondents had a long-term illness (health problem or handicap which limited their daily activities, including those due to old age). In Great Britain, 13.1 per cent of residents said yes. The highest rates of long-term illness were found in areas, currently or in the recent past, of coal mining/heavy industry: Wales, Western Scotland, Northern and North-East England. Unemployment rates were significantly higher among those declaring themselves disabled but available for work (see Table 3).

Table 3. Total percentage unemployment rate and unemployment rate of those with long-term illness but economically active, aged 20-64, by sex, Great Britain, 1991

	Men	Women	Total
Total % unemployment rate	10.74	6.21	8.81
% unemployment rate of those with long-term illness	22.99	13.76	19.58

Source: Office of Population Censuses and Surveys/Registrar General Scotland (1994). Adapted from Limiting long-term illness, Great Britain (Table 1)

Over two-fifths of disabled people of working age are economically active, as table 4 shows.

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[20] Qualified people are those with higher university degrees, first degrees & equivalent and other qualifications obtained at 18 or above, above A level/Higher & below 1st degree. It includes most teaching/nursing qualifications.

[21] These are not all necessarily in separate households.

[22] Families are defined as composed of adults, married or cohabiting, with or without dependent children, + lone parents with dependent children).

Table 4. Economic activity status of a sample of disabled people of working age, by sex, Summer 1997, United Kingdom, percentages

	Men %	Women %	All %
In employment:			
full-time	29	15	23
part-time	5	16	10
Unemployed:			
less than 1 year	4	3	3
1 year or more	4	3	3
Economically inactive	57	65	60
All disabled (thousands) (=100%)	2.5	2.2	4.7

Source: Social Trends 1998

Although unemployment rates have fallen in line with the general rate, it should be noted that, whereas 31 per cent of all unemployed non-disabled people had been unemployed for a year or more, the comparative figure for the unemployed disabled is 48 per cent. It is probably the case too that some who are economically inactive are in fact discouraged workers.

Although the rates of certain disabilities can be reduced through pre-birth screening, disabilities, including both mental illness and physical injury, continue to be acquired by significant numbers of people. For example, it is estimated that 100-150 per 100,000 population, mainly young males, will suffer a severe head injury through road accidents, assaults or sport. About four-fifths of these will have been in jobs prior to injury but perhaps only a quarter will return to work without support. Traumatic brain injury may affect co-ordination, speech and language, stamina, memory, personality, concentration and intellectual functioning. In addition, even those who have previously been employed or have qualifications, but have subsequently suffered brain injury or mental illness, suffer severe loss of confidence, assertiveness and the skills of self-presentation. Every disabled person is different and customised rehabilitation is essential, until the individual can progress into employment or mainstream education and training.

Physical disability

An initial problem is that physical disablement is hard to define and official definitions are subject to change, especially where entitlement to social welfare is concerned. Two trends are, however, clear: the prevalence and severity of disability increases with age; and the majority of disabled people of working age are not eligible for attendance or mobility allowance.

A survey of disability among adults in Great Britain was undertaken by the Office of Population Censuses and Surveys (OPCS) between 1985 and 1988. It found around 2 million adults below 60 with disabilities ranging from mild, such as partial deafness, through impaired intellectual functioning to severely impaired mobility. The majority of disabled adults had more than one type of disability. The most common types of disability of people living in private households are arthritis, ear and eye complaints and diseases of the circulatory system.

In 1989 the number of economically active and occupationally handicapped was estimated by the Employment Service (ES) at 1.3 million; of these, 800,000 were employed, 100,000 self-employed and 300,000 unemployed and seeking paid work. Using the 1944 Employment Act definition of disability, it was found that 1.1 million people could register as disabled, though not all chose to do so. Using the 1944 definition, 4 per cent of all employees were entitled to register as disabled. Since there is an employment quota target of 3 per cent, this was held to be a source of satisfaction.

Another source is the General Household Survey (GHS), which collects data on chronic sickness based on people's own assessment of their health. Though necessarily subjective to a degree, the differences between socio-economic groups are very marked, as Table 5 shows.

Table 5. Reported long-standing illness or disability: by socio-economic group and condition group, 1989-90 Great Britain. Rates per thousand people.

	Professional	Employers and Managers	Inter-mediate	Skilled manual	Semi-skilled manual	Unskilled manual	Total[23]
All long-standing illness	291	325	349	370	416	478	365
Sample size (persons aged 16 & over)	1,164	3,557	4,065	5,987	3,190	981	19,562

Source: General Household Survey, in Social Trends, Edition 22 Published 1992

For most illnesses and disabilities, unskilled manual workers show the highest rates and professionals the lowest, a finding which has been constant since 1972.

Learning disability

Social services provided include day centres. In 1993 over two thirds of all attendances were by people aged 16 to 64, and just over 70 per cent of these had learning disabilities. There were 37,000 people in Great Britain living in homes for people with learning disabilities. The majority, however, have always been cared for in the community, and there has been a general increase in the number of people with learning disabilities discharged after a stay of five years or more from National Health Service (NHS) hospitals. The number of beds available for people with learning disabilities 1991-2 was less than half the 1982 number, but has been partially replaced by voluntary and private sector places, day hospital places and the services of community nurses.

Mental illness

In Great Britain in 1993 there were 12 thousand people living in homes for mentally ill people but, as is the case with the learning disabled, the majority have always been cared for in the community. There has been an increasing number of discharges from hospital of mentally ill patients, and a shift to community care and day-patient treatment. In 1991-92 the number of beds available for mental illness patients in England was less than two thirds the number in 1982, but has been partially replaced by voluntary and private sector places, day hospital places and the services of community psychiatric nurses. Mentally ill people now account for a significant proportion of the street homeless.

Ethnic minorities, immigrants, Travellers and refugees

The LFS changed its ethnic origin classification in 1992 to match that used in the 1991 Census of Population; notably, the category 'black' now subsumes both people from the Caribbean and Africans, despite the marked differences between these groups of culture, language, educational attainment, length of settlement, demographic characteristics and reason for United Kingdom residence. This makes it impossible to present meaningful data over a period of time. Nevertheless, it is a constant that groups classed as 'ethnic minorities' include only those with a darker skin colour. Other groups of immigrant origin, such as Americans, Australians, other Europeans and Irish (the biggest group of all) are classed as 'White'.

The 'ethnic minorities' do, however, suffer greater disadvantage than other groups, and differ demographically in some respects. For example, they tend to have a greater proportion of young people (of whom a majority under 16 were born in the United Kingdom) and a much smaller one of retired or older people (see Table 6).

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[23] Members of the Armed Forces, persons in inadequately described occupations and all persons who have never worked are not shown as separate categories but are included in the total.

Table 6. Population by ethnic group and age, 1996-7, Great Britain, percentages

Ethnic group:	Under 16	16-34	35-64	65 and over	All (=100%), millions
White	20	27	37	16	52.9
Black (1)	29	37	29	5	0.9
Indian	27	32	36	5	0.9
Pakistani	38	35	24	2	0.6
Bangladeshi	42	35	20	3	0.2
Chinese	17	41	38	4	0.1
Other (2)	40	32	26	2	0.8
All ethnic groups	21	27	37	15	56.3

(1) Includes Afro-Caribbean, African and other Black (2) Includes other ethnic groups of non-mixed origin and people of mixed origin.

Source: Employment Department, in Social Trends 1998

The age distribution, however, differs markedly between some groups; and people of ethnic minority origin, whatever their country of birth, are often at a disadvantage in the labour market, particularly in areas of high unemployment such as Scotland. Although only 1.3 per cent of Scotland's population is defined as ethnic minority, compared with just over 5 per cent in England and Wales (Dalton & Hampton 1994), they suffer labour market disadvantage (see table 7).

Table 7. Ethnic minorities and white employment in Scotland (%), 1991 (10% sample)

Economic activity	Ethnic minorities		Whites	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Full-time employment	48.3	43.2	71.2	54.0
Part-time employment	4.5	23.4	2.7	32.2
Self-employed (with employees)	18.7	8.9	4.9	2.0
Self-employed (without employees	11.3	7.7	6.9	2.7
On a government scheme	2.6	2.7	1.9	1.5
Unemployed	14.6	14.2	12.4	7.6

Source: Dalton & Hampton 1994

White, Black and Indian women have a much higher economic activity rate than Pakistani or Bangladeshi women. There are, then, issues here for access to adult vocational guidance. The heterogeneity of the ethnic minority population shown in Table 6 warns against blanket measures to help them in the labour market. The unemployment rate varies between groups and so does the type of employment entered, as shown in Table 8.

Table 8. People in employment (1) by ethnic group, socio-economic group (2) and gender, Spring 1994, Great Britain, percentages

Ethnic group	Black	Indian	Pakistani or Bangladeshi	Other ethnic minority groups	All ethnic minority groups	White
Males						
Professional	..	13.7	19.5	11.7	8.2	8.4
Intermediate	25.2	30.5	18.3	28.2	26.3	31.1
Skilled non-manual	13.7	13.5	15.7	16.8	14.7	11.6
Skilled manual	28.6	22.3	33.5	19.2	25.3	31.6
Partly skilled	17.2	17.0	22.9	11.1	16.9	13.4
Unskilled	9.4	..	..	..	5.1	4.1
All males ('000s) (=100%)[3]	144	190	110	126	571	12,887
Females						
Professional	..	7.0	..	..	4.8	2.6
Intermediate	35.1	23.2	28.7	30.9	29.4	30.3
Skilled non-manual	28.8	34.2	40.7	35.9	33.5	37.0
Skilled manual	9.6	..	..	..	8.1	8.1
Partly skilled	14.2	26.7		13.0	18.7	15.5
Unskilled	9.7	..	..	..	5.5	6.6
All females ('000s) (=100%)[2]	147	152	45	103	443	102,72

1 Males aged 16 to 64, females aged 16 to 59. 2 Based on occupation. 3 Includes members of the armed forces and those who did not give ethnic group or occupation.
Source: Employment Department, in Social Trends 1995

The striking disparities in unemployment rates between ethnic groups, particularly for men, are partly caused by discrimination by employers against ethnic minorities. To deal with complaints on the ground of race discrimination, the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) was set up in the 1970s. Unlike the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC), the CRE does not collect information on general enquiries, so the figures in the table below refer to applications for assistance or advice.

Table 9. Applications[1] to the Commission for Racial Equality, Great Britain. Numbers

	1981	1986	1991	1993
Employment	547	619	1203	1160
Services	317	380	375	425
Out of scope of Race Relations Act	0	17	77	45
All applications	864	1016	1655	1630

1 Applications for assistance or advice with a formal complaint under the Race Relations Act.
Source: CRE

Between 1991 and 1993 CRE employment related applications fell slightly but the general trend is upward and employment is the main arena for complaints.

Travellers

The Romany are another important though often overlooked minority. A report produced by John Cripps in 1976 for the Department of the Environment estimated that there were about 8 to 9 thousand Romany families in England and Wales, probably containing about 40 thousand people. There are other travelling people, too, including Travellers (of Irish origin) and the so-called New Age Travellers, but it is hard to be sure of total numbers. There has also been a small number of Romany from the former Czechoslovakia arriving and requesting refugee status.

Refugees

The United Nations Declaration of Human Rights states that 'everyone has the right to seek and enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution' (Articles 13 and 14, 1951 United Nations Convention on Refugees). A refugee is someone who leaves, or remains outside, his or her country of origin, owing to a well-founded fear of persecution, for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political party. An asylum seeker is someone who has left their country and is seeking refugee status under the Convention.

Germany is by far the biggest recipient of applications, receiving 127,937 (this figure includes dependent children only where their parents request asylum for them) of the 290,000 applications in Europe in 1995. The United Kingdom, however, is the second largest recipient, and between 1994 and 1995 there was a 30 per cent increase, from 42,200 to 55,000 (the figures include all dependent children) (Eurostat 1996).

Table 10. Applications received for asylum (excluding dependants) and decisions (1): by main geographical area of origin, 1996, thousands, United Kingdom

Numbers	Europe, Americas	Africa	Middle East	Asia	Nationality not known	All
Applications received	8.2	11.3	2.2	7.9	0.1	29.6
Decisions[1] taken:						
Recognised as a refugee and granted asylum	1.2	0.2	0.7	..	0.0	2.2
Not recognised as a refugee but granted exceptional leave to remain	0.4	3.9	0.3	0.5	0.0	5.0
Refused asylum and exceptional leave	5.6	16.0	0.6	9.5	..	31.7
Applications withdrawn	0.9	1.2	0.1	0.7	..	2.9
Applications outstanding at end of year	17.0	25.2	3.7	11.3	0.2	27.4

1 Excludes South East Asia Refugees. Information is of initial determination decisions, excluding the outcome of appeals or other subsequent decisions. Decisions figures do not necessarily relate to applications made in 1993.

Source: Home Office, in Social Trends 1998

Some of the backlog of applications was cleared after May 1997 but the tendency, where permission to stay was granted, was to deny refugee status but grant exceptional leave to remain.

For agencies dealing with the needs of asylum-seekers, there is a number of problems. First, the numbers involved can be substantial. Secondly, the numbers fluctuate unpredictably. Thirdly, asylum-seekers are heterogeneous in origin, especially in the United Kingdom. For example, in 1995, it is estimated that asylum-seekers came from the countries in Table 11.

Table 11. Country of origin of asylum-seekers in the United Kingdom, 1995

Somalia	3,465	Iraq	930
Pakistan	2,915	Romania	770
Sri Lanka	2,070	Iran	615
Turkey	1,820	Afghanistan	580
Yugoslavia	1,565	Other	40,270

Source: Eurostat 1996

The category 'other' is by far the largest in Europe, and even though Nigeria was the major sending country to the United Kingdom in 1995, it is clear that a range of expertise is needed to deal with the diverse culture and language-groups needing help.

Homeless people

There has been a large rise in homelessness in recent years. Local authorities in Great Britain have a statutory duty to secure (not necessarily to provide) accommodation for applicants who are homeless or threatened with homelessness, who are in priority need. The priority categories as defined in the Housing (Homeless Persons) Act 1977 are households containing dependent children or a pregnant woman, the elderly, disabled, mentally ill or other vulnerable people. The proportion of households with a member who is vulnerable due to mental illness has doubled since 1989 although still only accounts for four per cent of those in priority need. A survey in England in 1995-6 found that six per cent of all households reported that they had been homeless at some time in the previous ten years. Of these, two-thirds had approached the local council and been rehoused; one-sixth had not been accepted as homeless and one-sixth had not approached the council (Social Trends 1998).

Those accepted are found permanent accommodation or placed in temporary accommodation until permanent accommodation becomes available. In addition local councils secure accommodation for some homeless households not in priority need, or advise and assist them with finding accommodation themselves. The number not in priority need who received accommodation in 1992 was less than half that in 1989, doubtless because of the cost, the dwindling stock of social housing and the decline in local authority real incomes. Almost two-thirds of households in temporary accommodation are in London. Not only does the capital have the largest population, it is also a magnet for those seeking employment or refuge.

Table 12. Approximate numbers in temporary accommodation (1,2), Great Britain, thousands

	1983	1986	1990	1993	1996
Households in temporary accommodation at end of year (1)	11	23	48	58	46

1 Includes households awaiting outcome of homelessness enquiries.
3 A house not suitable for a long-term tenancy. This includes mobile homes, privately leased dwellings and permanent accommodation used on a temporary basis, which generally are cheaper forms of accommodation than bed and breakfast places and hostels.
Source: Department of the Environment; Welsh Office; Scottish Development Department, in Social Trends 1987, 1992

Temporary accommodation includes bed and breakfast, hostels including women's refuges, short life tenancies and houses unsuitable for long-term tenancy, such as mobile homes, privately leased dwellings and permanent accommodation used on a temporary basis. Although the numbers are now falling, homelessness is still a serious issue. In Scotland alone, it has been estimated that an average of 21,000 children have become homeless every year since 1990 (Shelter 1996). The percentage of new allocations of local authority housing to homeless households in the United Kingdom as a whole therefore rose from 16 per cent in 1981-2 to 33 per cent in 1992-3.

The actual numbers of homeless people are greater than appear. The first Census of Population to attempt to count people sleeping rough in the open air rather than in shelters, hostels or squats was in 1991, on April 21st. With the help of local authorities, voluntary groups and churches, over 2,700 were counted as sleeping rough that night in England and Wales, almost half of these in London. This is likely to be an underestimate. Probably a much larger number, however, sleep in friends' and relatives' living rooms and since they have a private address are not counted.

The biggest reasons, in order of importance, for homelessness are the unwillingness of parents, relatives or friends to continue accommodating someone; the loss of private rented dwelling; breakdown of relationship with partner; and court order because of mortgage default or rent arrears. The increase in property repossessed because of mortgage default or rent arrears arose from a combination of rising unemployment, rising house prices and rising interest rates. Repossessions executed rose by 31 per cent between 1979 and 1982 alone. Between 1981 and 1990, statutory homelessness as a result of a court order following mortgage default or rent arrears increased by 2.5 times.

Other reasons are people being released from penal and mental institutions; people leaving the armed services; young people leaving home after quarrelling with parents or suffering abuse or leaving social care; alcoholism and drug addiction; and loss of or inability to find employment. These are particularly at risk of social exclusion, and may carry additional burdens. For example, a London organisation focusing on support for people under the age of 26, either homeless or in danger of becoming so, found that over 60 per cent of its clients were of ethnic minority origin (Alone in London 1996). The plight of families in temporary accommodation should not, of course, be overlooked. These are also likely to be unemployed or on low incomes.

Summary

We cannot estimate the total number of people who risk or actually suffer social exclusion; but the high proportion of people in poverty is a reasonable indication. The majority of these are either adults of working age or children with reduced life chances. Many of the poor are unemployed or women or disabled or from an ethnic minority. Some are refugees; others are homeless. Some are all of these. They are more likely than the average to have no or low qualifications, or to have skills that are no longer valued. The next part of this United Kingdom survey, therefore, reviews the kinds of opportunities available for those who need to access lifelong learning.

LIFELONG LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

The old distinction between education and training, never a clear-cut one in practice, is increasingly discarded in favour of 'learning', along with an emphasis on core transferable skills (such as problem-solving, communication, teamwork, use of Information and Communication Technologies [ICT], literacy and numeracy) and learning how to learn, rather than simply learning how to carry out a task which may well be redundant within a few years. The term 'vocational learning' will be used in the sense that it is focused on a particular career goal or field of practice, with the proviso that much learning which begins as non-vocational may lead to more work-oriented learning or even directly into employment, and many people move from purely vocational learning to 'learning for its own sake' (Clayton & Slowey, forthcoming).

As noted by Nisbett and Watt (1994) recession and redundancy have affected even the middle classes. For those adults who can access it, there is, therefore, a wide variety of programmes, either targeted at adults (such as community adult education, liberal education through university extra-mural departments or voluntary organisations such as the Workers' Educational Association (WEA), programmes for labour market returners or long-term unemployed people) or open to adults (such as universities, colleges and programmes whereby adults can return to second level education in schools), accredited or non-accredited, on fixed schedules or by open learning at the learner's own pace, with face-to-face tuition or by distance learning. The Open University (OU) and the Open College have now been joined by, for example, universities offering courses through the Internet. A major accreditation body is the Edexcel Foundation, formed from a merger between the former Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC) and London Examinations. Edexcel accredits courses in the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE), General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQs), General Certificate of Education Advanced Levels (GCE A levels), BTEC First, National and Higher National Certificates and Diplomas, BTEC Professional Development Diplomas, Certificates and Awards, National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) at levels 1-5 and Key Skills Awards up to degree-equivalent level.

Vocational learning is provided not only by the above programmes, but also by employers, the voluntary sector, including churches, which are among the biggest providers in Scotland, and the WEA, private training organisations, TECs (in

Scotland, Local Enterprise Companies [LECs]), local development companies (LDCs), and local and national government organisations. Trade unions must be singled out as important providers with close contact with many low-paid and low-skilled workers, and they play a vital role in implementing Employee Development Programmes (EDP) such as the Ford Employee Development and Assistance Programme (EDAP) in which guidance is provided by the University of East London. Research shows that advice and guidance are essential components of such schemes (Parsons et al. 1998).

Another example of their work is 'Bargaining for Skills' (BfS), run by the Trades Union Congress (TUC) and the Scottish Trades Union Congress (STUC) in partnership with TECs/LECs, intended to implement a lifelong learning strategy for workers within companies. This aims to train shop stewards and other trade union activists to highlight among employees the necessity of further training; to change the culture of apathy and opposition concerning lifelong learning at grassroots level; and to negotiate with employers the provision of training. The ultimate aim is the provision of training facilities in every workplace, with perhaps smaller companies having shared facilities or larger companies sharing theirs with their subcontractors (TUC 1998). So far vocational guidance is not a part of this scheme, but Scottish Enterprise has agreed to fund one person in Scotland to visit trade unions and workplaces offering practical advice on training, obtaining grants and so on. Although unions do not normally represent the unemployed, they do support Unemployed Workers' Resource Centres, which give basic guidance to their members.

The success rate in terms of jobs retained by those on a programme specifically aimed at the unemployed is very variable. For example, the Open Learning Credits pilot programme ran from April 1993 to March 1994, aimed at 'training and up-skilling long-term unemployed people and returners to the labour market'. This involved about 2,900 learners, of whom 11 per cent were returners. The subsequent evaluation found that 43 per cent of those who found jobs moved from manual or personal services into white-collar jobs, and 67 per cent who had obtained jobs by November 1993 were still employed six months later. This compares favourably with, for example, the Restart Cohort Study which showed that only 40 per cent retained jobs at an equivalent point (Crowley-Bainton 1995).

Scotland

Scotland has separate educational and legal systems from the rest of the United Kingdom. One of the major priorities in learning provision for adults in Scotland has been 'continuing education' with a focus on education on an outreach or community basis. The case of Glasgow, the largest city in Scotland, illustrates both the types of learning available to adults and some of the difficulties. In April 1996, local government reform brought about the break-up of Strathclyde Regional Council and abolished the two-tier structure in which there was both regional and district government. Careers and educational services formerly serving the Region now have to negotiate with twelve local councils for funding. The biggest of these is Glasgow City Council, whose Education Department has responsibility for provision at all levels: pre-school, primary school, secondary school and post-school, through to the Community Education Service (CES) (City of Glasgow 1995).

The CES's main functions are to provide youth services, community development and adult and continuing education. In Glasgow there are 14 area offices offering a wide range of informal learning opportunities in local schools and community centres which can form preparation for returning to further education or employment or may constitute learning purely for interest's sake. Educational guidance is a feature of the service. The Education Department also aims to give financial assistance to voluntary and community groups which provide adult and continuing education.

The three universities in Glasgow, the University of Glasgow, the University of Strathclyde and Glasgow Caledonian University, have all forged links with employers and statutory and voluntary organisations to meet the diverse learning needs of adults in the Glasgow area. All three universities have been involved in initiatives to improve access for adult students. One such measure is the provision of courses at undergraduate level in the evening, from which credit can be accumulated towards recognised awards in a flexible manner. Other initiatives have included mentoring schemes to encourage greater participation of black and ethnic minority students in academic areas in which they are under-represented and greater participation in higher education amongst those in areas of socio-economic deprivation. For example, Govan Initiative (an LDC) has joined with the University of Glasgow's Department of Adult and Continuing Education to offer a pre-access outreach project which allows participants to sample academic subjects, taught by university tutors in community venues. On completion, students are guaranteed a place on the university's access course which prepares students for full-time study towards a degree in science or arts and social sciences. There is a focus on study skills and confidence-building. The sessions take place within school hours, with crèche facilities.

Another initiative aimed at the lower-paid is the University of Glasgow's 'Learning Works', an EDP which offers free courses of their choice, up to a value of £100 in a year, to all non-academic staff. The Learning Works team is also collaborating with Govan Initiative and small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to deliver a similar service to their employees. All applicants have access to free vocational guidance.

There are ten further education colleges within the Glasgow City Council boundary. These offer a wide range of mainly full-time vocational courses. There is also part-time provision and specialist provision for adults who lack the necessary requirements to enter directly into a full-time vocational or academic course of study. Cardonald College, for example, offers a Confidence Building course and a Return to Study course. The former aims to equip learners with skills in English and Arithmetic and self-confidence to prepare for progression to further study leading to a recognised award. The attendance pattern is flexible, to meet the student's needs. The latter is a one-year (part-time or full-time) course which also concentrates on basic skills, while giving students the opportunity to gain computing and keyboard skills and course tasters to assist with decision-making about further study. No entry requirements are set for these courses and they are supported by the European Social Fund (ESF) and ES respectively. Glasgow College of Nautical Studies offers Supported Learning courses which are aimed at adults with special educational needs. Students are given the opportunity to develop a wide range of skills including communications skills, money management, numeracy, swimming, music, drama, home-making and information technology. These are full-time courses which can lead to further full-time study, training or employment.

Some Glasgow providers of Employment Training (formerly called Training for Work, the government-funded vocational training programme for the unemployed) offer supportive training to adults with specialist training needs, whether educational, social or health-related. Enable Services, for example, offer a Skillstart training programme, which gives participants the opportunity to train in a variety of occupational areas, through a combination of employer-based and training centre-based learning. The programme leads towards a recognised award, Scottish Vocational Qualification (SVQ) level 1. While there is no guarantee of employment, trainees can improve literacy and numeracy skills and benefit from experience in the world of work.

There are two major intermediate labour market organisations based in Glasgow, the Wise Group (see case study 34) and Glasgow Works (see Gorbals Initiative, case study 32). These provide a mixture of employment and training to the long-term unemployed, at the same time as delivering valuable services to disadvantaged areas, such as housing refurbishment, environmental improvements, childcare and afterschool care, as well as recycling services for the city as a whole. Glasgow Works is supported by the Glasgow Development Agency (GDA), City of Glasgow Council, the ES, the ESF, Scottish Enterprise and the STUC.

The single tier authorities are undeniably less able to commit funding to initiatives designed to meet the learning needs of adults at risk of social exclusion than the former regional authority of Strathclyde. The Education Departments do, however, still carry the power to allocate funds to agencies involved in adult education, and there are projects across Glasgow, for example, delivered by LDCs, employers and training providers, universities, colleges and various voluntary organisations which are designed to increase the participation of disadvantaged groups in lifelong learning.

LIFELONG LEARNING IN THE UNITED KINGDOM: POLICY DEVELOPMENT TO MAY 1997

Under the previous (Conservative) government, official policy in relation to lifelong learning emphasised new and effective partnerships at national and local level. At national level, organisations representing employers and employees needed to work together to promote lifelong learning. Focus was placed on the need to support organisations working towards Investors In People (IiP), an award to employers who support their workforce through training, and to encourage firms and trade unions to develop effective strategies for learning in the workplace. There was thus great emphasis on the responsibility of employers in encouraging involvement in learning: through the TECs the government set up employee development schemes (EDS) which offer individuals some financial assistance to undertake learning outwith working hours. Essentially, however, individuals were to bear responsibility for their own learning.

At local level, government offices have worked with local authorities, TECs/LECs and employers. Partnerships between these and other agencies were regarded as an important means of addressing the education and training issues in TEC/LEC areas. Colleges and local education authorities were expected to plan and deliver co-ordinated programmes. TECs/LECs and careers services needed to continue to work together and with others to produce high quality information, advice and guidance for adults.

Some reference was made to basic skills (functional literacy and numeracy essential for all) and the needs of particular groups in society. Policies in tackling low achievement in basic skills were reviewed and learning goals in language, literacy and numeracy were set for children learning in nursery education. Training for Work pilot programmes providing pre-vocational and basic skills training for unemployed adults were seen as a way of overcoming the problem of low achievement in basic skills.

In making learning opportunities accessible to all, the government saw the following as important goals:

- the provision of courses tailored to meet the needs of particular groups, such as ex-offenders and single parents
- provision of opportunities where people live and work rather than in existing institutions
- the provision of appropriate childcare
- the enhancement of work-based learning
- learning being undertaken in familiar environments

In practical terms the government tried to make learning more accessible through the introduction of unit-based vocational qualifications, by Career Development Loans whereby unemployed individuals can borrow a sum of money which must be put towards learning which is career-related, and through propagation of open and distance learning methods. This still leaves problems for employed people: as Hillage (1996) has pointed out, work-based training in Britain concentrates on younger, full-time staff in professional and managerial jobs. There are fewer learning opportunities for other workers, and government training targets have not been met, as a result of slow uptake of NVQs/SVQs.

In December 1995, the Secretary of State for Education and Employment distributed *Lifetime Learning: A Consultation Document* to over 4,000 organisations in Great Britain, including local authorities, universities, colleges, TECs/LECs, employers, voluntary organisations and providers of government-funded vocational training (DfEE 1996b). Of the 480 responses received by the end of February, about 70 were Scottish and around 20 Welsh. In the document the government stressed that the goal of lifelong learning is a shared one - amongst employers, individuals and organisations involved in education and training. Government has a role to play, but is by no means solely responsible for lifelong learning. Although the thrust was the importance of competing in international markets, the rapid change of the labour market and the growth of part-time employment, the document made explicit reference to the role of learning in overcoming socio-economic barriers: 'Learning can help overcome social disadvantage and exclusion; it can help build positive and productive communities' (Department for Education and Employment [DfEE] 1996b, p.6).

Responses were collated and published in *Lifetime Learning: A Summary of responses to the government's consultation document* (DfEE 1996c). A summary of these responses indicates the gap between policy and its effects:

- Disadvantaged groups and non-traditional participants in learning should have access to learning at all times, and there should be free provision of basic skills for the unemployed; but funding cuts suffered by both local authorities and voluntary organisations have led to resourcing difficulties.
- The focus should be on making best use of existing resources at local level. Partnerships should be as wide as possible, and linked with other community initiatives.
- Vocational qualifications such as NVQs and SVQs should be more effectively promoted.
- There is a need for more flexible ways of paying for learning, taking into account the inability or unwillingness of many learners to use loans to pay for training.
- The use of technology should be extended to reach under-represented groups
- The importance of impartial guidance and information on learning should be recognised.

Scotland

Here it is the Scottish Office, rather than Westminster, which represents national policy on education. In February 1997 the then Secretary of State for Scotland, Michael Forsyth (1997), set out central government plans for lifelong learning in Scotland in his paper *Lifelong Learning: the way forward*. Scottish responses to the United Kingdom-wide consultation on lifelong learning showed support for the concept of a learning culture, and general agreement on the need to sustain it. There was also, however, recognition that particular barriers to learning exist in Scotland: geographical remoteness, childcare problems, financial barriers and lack of self-confidence among potential learners. The Secretary of State pledged to support the Scottish Campaign for Learning, which actively promotes learning for life through conferences, seminars and newsletters; and the government committed £6 million to lifelong learning and adult guidance following recommendations made by the Scottish Skills Forum. The funding was to be spread over a three year period, and included a commitment to developing and strengthening the role of the Advisory Scottish Council on Education and Training Targets (ASCETT), support for the Campaign for Learning and bringing together education, training and business to promote lifelong learning.

Lifelong Learning: the way forward does not make specific reference to groups at risk of social exclusion. There is, however, education offered in the community across Scotland which does aim to meet the needs of disadvantaged groups. Details of these are documented in the Scottish Office (1996a) published report, which was based on the work of Learning Initiatives for Adults in Scottish Education (LIAISE), a group set up to survey provision of community-based adult learning and provide examples of good practice and areas for development.

ACCESS TO LIFELONG LEARNING FOR THOSE AT RISK OF SOCIAL EXCLUSION: GOVERNMENT POLICY AND INITIATIVES SINCE MAY 1997

Despite the recent focus on lifelong learning, access remains difficult for those at risk of social exclusion. According to Oxford University, of the 16,000 people in 1996 who obtained three top grades at GCE A level, a mere 88 were children of unskilled parents. Women, on the other hand, have greatly increased their participation in higher education, and now form just over 50 per cent of all undergraduates, though only 45 per cent of all postgraduates. In further education women are in the majority (for example, 57 per cent in England in 1993/4).

Disabled students face particular difficulties where wheelchair access is required and this is particularly marked in the older universities. Facilities for hearing- and visually-impaired students are not available as a matter of course, except in the OU. This university is in theory open to all groups. No prior qualifications of any kind are required for entry and since distance learning is the main element it is open to people who are confined to home or are in hospital, prison or other institution. Home and telephone tuition and home examinations can be provided. Since study is part-time and a degree can take as many years as necessary, those with jobs and childcare responsibilities (mainly women) can take a degree with a minimum of disruption. The main problem is the fees. Part-time students cannot currently obtain local authority grants and although there are bursaries for students on low incomes or social security, these are limited in number relative to the demand.

Access to education for those on benefit is limited by the rule whereby entitlement to benefit ceases if the recipient takes courses totalling more than 16 hours per week. This limits the capacity of people with low qualifications to upgrade them through further education, although this form of education has been identified as of great potential benefit (Further Education Funding Council 1997).

[illegible]

Access to vocational education/training is greatest for those already in employment, through their employers, but it is generally the best-qualified who participate in employer-supported or -provided courses. Women are much more likely than men to fund their own vocational learning (Clayton & Slowey 1996). Government-provided training courses for the unemployed have had uneven outcomes in terms of resulting employment; and funding cuts for local authorities and voluntary organisations have had adverse effects on community-based learning programmes.

Many of the policy initiatives so far made by the present (Labour) government are designed to overcome some of these difficulties, notably Welfare to Work (the New Deal), Employment Zones, the University for Industry (UfI), Learning Direct, Individual Learning Accounts, the Adult and Community Learning Fund and the National Grid for Learning (NGfL).

Welfare to Work

This initiative of the new Labour government was first piloted in Pathfinder Areas, and launched nationally 6 April 1998. The amount allocated to New Deal generally is £3.5 billion, funded from a one-off windfall tax on the privatised utilities. It involves all aged 18 to 24 who have been unemployed for six months or more (for whom it is compulsory), plus people eligible for early entry because of disability, literacy/numeracy problems, ESOL need, ex-regular members of the armed forces, ex-offenders, lone parents, labour market returners, and others judged by the ES to be at a severe disadvantage in their search for work, such as homeless people or those with drink or drug problems (Scottish Office 1998a). From June 1998 those aged 25 or over were included. Young unemployed people have four options:

- to enter paid employment, mainly in the private sector - employers will receive a subsidy of £60 per week full-time or £40 per week part-time for up to six months and a training allowance of up to £750
- to enter work in the voluntary sector, with a similar training allowance
- to join an environmental taskforce, with a similar training allowance
- to go into full-time education/training for twelve months
- no fifth option

If the client completes an option but still has no job, they will return to claiming the Job Seekers' Allowance (JSA) and enter a Follow-Through period, during which they remain on JSA but receive intensive help to find a job.

New Deal in Scotland differs slightly from the rest of the United Kingdom. For example, the LECs share the lead in the employment option with the ES, and are the lead partners in the education/training option along with the Further Education (FE) Colleges. The environmental taskforce is led by local authorities or voluntary organisations, and the volunteer option by a consortium of voluntary organisations.

The innovative aspect of New Deal of most interest here is that clients can spend up to four months in Gateway, led by the ES working with vocational guidance and counselling services. The aim is to improve employability and assist with finding unsubsidised jobs. Those who do not succeed then move into one of the four options listed above. About a quarter of those entering Gateway are expected to be fairly routine cases, but the remainder will require in-depth guidance and personal development. This is done by specialised agencies (including some on which we have done case studies). It is client-based, with contracts based on the needs of the individual, who moreover have a choice of guidance service. Special initiatives for lone parents began in Autumn 1998 and there are also measures for disabled people.

Up to the end of June 1998, 10,000 people had joined the New Deal in Scotland and 1,700 had left. Almost 1,000 of these had left the Gateway to go into unsubsidised employment. Of the 8,300 remaining in New Deal in June, over three-quarters of participants were male and an eighth were disabled; and 7,600 were on the Gateway.

Although the introduction of Gateway is a very welcome development, there is concern that the period allowed in it is too short, especially for the most disadvantaged, such as ex-offenders and disabled people.

Employment Zones

A Glasgow partnership, the Glasgow Learning Alliance[24], has also succeeded in its application to run an Employment Zone, which was to begin in February 1998 and last for two years. This is to benefit people aged 25 or over and unemployed for at least one year. Unlike New Deal, this will be a voluntary process. It will target labour market returners, disabled people and lone parents. Initiatives will include Learning for Work, help with starting a business (also available under New Deal) and an intermediate labour market. There is an integral role for guidance and the Alliance will work closely with the Glasgow Adult Guidance Network. It is expected that 1,000 users (out of 8,000 long-term unemployed) will be in the Employment Zone at any one time. The aim is to facilitate a learning culture and help attain the ASCETT targets. One feature will be the development of EDP among SMEs, led by the University of Glasgow, the GDA and Govan Initiative.

The University for Industry (UfI)

A major policy focus has been that of networking, as a means of meeting users' needs in local areas and openly discussing shared goals and quality issues. UfI is one example of this. This is a brokering service, intended to raise the educational and skill levels of the workforce, particularly those with low skills and/or working in SMEs. Its principal functions are likely to be motivating, guiding, informing, tutoring and mentoring, as well as ensuring the existence of an accessible range of quality-assured learning centres, developed out of Learning Direct (Hillman 1997b). It was piloted in the north east of England, with a one-stop shop, free phone line and website, including on-line booking for courses and on-line learning (free 'taster' courses are available). Over 800 calls were made to the UfI freephone number in October 1997. There are 35 UfI learning centres, based in colleges, libraries, companies, community buildings, a business centre, a football club, a university and a huge shopping complex, the Gateshead MetroCentre (Milner et al. 1998), and the recent grant of an award under the ADAPT programme of the European Commission will allow expansion to over 100 learning centres over a wider area. However, although vocational guidance services are used they do not form part of the partnership.

Learning Direct

Another useful development is a national telephone advice line, Learning Direct, which is free to the user. Access does not depend on the Internet, as this would erect a further barrier for the disadvantaged (from speech by Gareth Dent, DfEE, in Ingham 1998).

Individual Learning Accounts

The details of this scheme have not yet been finalised but it will involve the grant of a certain money credit to be used for learning.

Adult and Community Learning Fund

This will spend £5 m per annum over three years, with matched contributions from charitable trusts and will be administered by the National Institute for Adult and Continuing Education (NIACE) and the Basic Skills Agency.

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[24] Representatives include the City Council, the GDA, the Chamber of Commerce, Glasgow Education Business Partnership, universities, colleges of further education, schools, and locally-based companies and development agencies.

The National Grid for Learning (NGfL)
This will consist of a body of educational material available on the Internet, together with the provision of the necessary hardware, services and training. Ultimately it is intended to be available in all schools, colleges and libraries, thus providing access not only to pupils and students but to all engaged in lifelong learning. The Grid will also allow the delivery of many on-line UfI services; similarly any organisation or individual accessing the UfI will also be able to access NGfL content (Scottish Office 1998b).

It is generally accepted that poverty and lack of information are the greatest barriers to lifelong learning. Some of these initiatives go some way to addressing these, but it is vocational guidance, in addition to information and advice, that is needed to build vital bridges between people at risk of social exclusion, and education, training and employment. So what is the nature of this 'bridge' in the United Kingdom?

ADULT VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

In Britain, despite the great complexity of programmes described above, and despite many recommendations from various bodies on the increased need for guidance and labour market information, there is no statutory provider of vocational guidance open to all adults and guidance remains marginalised and under-funded. The ideal of lifelong careers guidance to support lifelong career development is very far from being met (Institute of Careers Guidance 1994).

The state ***Employment Service*** (ES) offers information and advice to the unemployed and a specialised service for disabled people, as well as placements and Job Clubs, but does not claim to be a holistic, client-centred guidance and counselling service.

Careers Services across the country offer a service to young people in schools, school leavers, full-time (and some part-time) students in colleges and adults with disabilities. All are now run on contract from the DfEE and many have become Careers Companies, private companies limited by guarantee, formed from former Local Authority Careers Services and obliged to serve people aged 21 or below. They are allowed to develop adult guidance but have to find their own funding for this (see case study no. 33, Careers Bradford Ltd). There is thus no requirement to offer a full service to adults, although some Careers Services are able to finance 'non-core' work, enabling any adult to request vocational guidance. This provision, however, varies widely. Some service providers' work with adult users is very limited. Some have introduced charges to adults who are in employment: these make up 52 per cent of enquiries. Those which do offer a broad adult guidance service can provide one-to-one vocational guidance interviews, careers information and the opportunity to make use of career interest guides, such as Adult Directions. Adults who require information on job vacancies and government training programmes (Employment Training) can also visit ES Job Centres, which are funded by central government to support those seeking employment or training.

Colleges of Further Education offer pre-entry guidance and counselling to adult enquirers, but there is no uniformity of provision. Some colleges have made use of input from their local Careers Service, while others have set up their own systems for guidance and counselling. A number of colleges have an arrangement whereby the caseload for pre-entry and on-course guidance is shared between their own advisers and an adviser from the local Careers Service. Support has been given to those with learning difficulties and from black and ethnic minority backgrounds, usually in the form of the employment of specialists whose work is concentrated at the post-entry stage. Some colleges have developed mobile units which offer pre-entry guidance and learning options in rural and inner city areas. In Scotland, for example, Perth College has a mobile training unit; and others, such as Glasgow's Cardonald College, have set up quite sophisticated advice centres which are well-resourced and offer a full guidance service to all members of the community. To what extent, however, is guidance in further education colleges 'impartial'? Payne and Edwards (1996) have argued that this needs to be explored further, not least because the notion of impartiality carries different and uncertain meanings, depending on the context of guidance in institutions.

Within ***Higher Education***, institutions provide guidance and information which focuses mainly on full-time students and graduates. Increasingly, institutions employ specialists who work with non-traditional entrants into higher education. Such posts are usually attached to flexible study and access programmes designed for adults, and educational guidance is offered at all stages, including pre-entry. The OU, however, incorporated an element of guidance and counselling into its courses from the beginning, and is widely acknowledged to have been instrumental in persuading adult educators of the value of guidance and in helping to set up and support many educational guidance services for adults (EGSAs).

The role of ***public libraries***, which receive many enquiries from adults, should not be overlooked: many work closely with their local EGSA (Taylor 1988).

Local authorities across Britain provide adult educational guidance services usually through community education or similar departments which offer a range of learning opportunities to adults. The CES in Scotland, however, has endured major funding cuts following the break-up of the Regional Councils in 1996.

Telephone helplines have been operating in Scotland for a number of years, in the former local government regions of Fife, Strathclyde and Central. Continuing Education Gateway's (see case study 30) freephone helpline, which serves the Strathclyde area in the West of Scotland, deals with some 13,000 enquiries per year (Scottish Office 1996b). Significantly, 50 per cent of enquiries are from those in employment and in fear of redundancy.

Women and New Directions (WAND) is a community-based adult guidance project for women, established in 1989. The project (funded by the ***Scottish Office***) aims to relieve poverty and advance employment, education and training opportunities for women in the Pilton area of Edinburgh. Priority is given to the low-waged, unemployed and less qualified. Courses in confidence-building, options and choices aim to help with decision-making. There is provision of one-to-one guidance, a crèche and some outreach work.

TECs/LECs and ***LDCs*** are involved in a range of guidance initiatives. Some offer pre-entry guidance to adults considering Employment Training. They have been involved in redundancy counselling and support for recruitment and placement of graduates. LDCs are based in areas of unemployment and deprivation and employ advisers whose main user group is the unemployed. Glasgow's Govan Initiative, for example, provides job-selling skills courses, advice on education and training opportunities and help with CV preparation. Agencies involved in the provision of learning opportunities for adults in the community recognise the importance of collaborative work to meet users' needs. There are already formal and informal ***partnerships*** amongst providers, for example between colleges, local authorities and LECs (responsible for funding Employment Training).

There is also a wide range of ***private sector organisations*** involved in the delivery of adult guidance. Some careers advisers work on a freelance basis and change fees to clients or organisations to which they are contracted. Some agencies offer psychometric testing and CV preparation. There are also ***private non-profit-making services and charities*** delivering guidance:

- In Glasgow, the mobile 'Step-Up to Adult Learning' project offers a drop-in facility on a fully-equipped bus for advice on learning. There is a regular weekend city centre presence, as well as visits to areas of high unemployment, both inner-city and peripheral housing schemes. Routeways in Paisley also runs a guidance bus (see case study 23). Other services operate through 'one-stop shops' in disadvantaged areas, such as North-East Network Skillshops and New Routes in Blantyre (see case studies 35 and 36).

- The National Association for the Education and Guidance of Offenders (Bridgebuilders) is an association of professionals involved in educational and guidance services to prisoners and ex-offenders.
- The Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB) has a Student Support Service to advise students in mainstream, further and higher education on matters related to study, career planning, mobility and library services. REHAB (Scotland) delivers guidance and training to a wide range of people with disabilities (see case study 22).
- Linking Education And Disability (LEAD) Scotland, through involvement in local guidance networks, has been able to extend guidance services to users in their own homes (see case study 21). LEAD North, operating in LEC areas in the Highlands and Islands, has used ESF grants to develop a team of local organisers and volunteers to offer home tuition and guidance. Links have been established with LECs and further education colleges to offer open learning and individual action plans, which are drawn up by tutors. LEAD North offers all students the opportunity to have teleworking experience.
- The 'Off the Streets and Into Work' initiative targets the young who are homeless or in housing need in London. Flourish House and the Community Volunteers Service in Glasgow and Making Training Work in London are among organisations offering guidance to the homeless (see case studies 26, 28 and 27).
- One Scottish organisation offering a range of services to lone parents is One Plus One Parent (see case study 24).
- The Refugee Access Project (RAP) was set up in Edinburgh in 1995 to cater for refugees and asylum seekers in the Edinburgh area, targeting in particular those who have been unemployed for at least six months and have English as a second language. The main objectives of the project (funded through ESF and local government) is to enable participants to make informed choices about education and training, and access these. Users are given the opportunity to gain work experience, develop English language skills, and receive careers guidance and counselling, which is delivered by a Guidance Counsellor attached to the local adult guidance service branch of the Careers Service (Career Development Edinburgh and Lothians). A daily allowance is paid to project members (which does not affect benefits) and there is financial assistance with travel and childcare provision. The Scottish Refugee Council (see case study 31) provides a more comprehensive service.
- There are services for and by ethnic minorities such as Meridian and the Ethnic Minority Enterprise Company in Glasgow (case studies 25 and 29).
- Unemployed Workers' Centres in Glasgow deliver vocational guidance.

Vocational guidance is often found ***embedded within educational programmes***. For example, in 1985 the University of Edinburgh established a 'Second Chance to Learn' programme to enable adults, who had gained few or no formal qualifications, to improve basic skills and work towards recognised vocational qualifications. Working in partnership with a range of agencies, the programme targets individuals in areas of social deprivation and learning opportunities have been offered in the community. Both guidance and childcare provision are part of the programme. Part of this programme involved adults in rural areas and Langholm and Eskdale Initiatives (formerly a CES), after consultation with local employers, highlighted the need for particular short courses for adults. These were offered in the community and covered areas like health and safety, supervisory skills and first aid (for projects in England see Cheeseman et al 1998; Fraser 1997; Grant 1997; McGrath 1997; Payne 1997; Ryley 1997; Whiting 1997). Other organisations incorporating guidance into programmes include the Women's Technology Centre's training courses, and the intermediate labour market organisations, which aim to help long-term unemployed people to acquire work experience, skills and personal and social development in the context of performing socially useful activities, for which they are paid a wage. Glasgow Works includes a landscape team to improve the physical environment and True GRIT, a team of market researchers, all unemployed for at least one year, which undertakes commissions. It is supported by local development companies such as Gorbals Initiative (see case study 32). The Wise Group (see case study 34), based in Glasgow, is the largest intermediate labour market (ILM) organisation in Europe.

Rural poverty is a real issue in Scotland. Long *et al* (1996) estimate that 65 per cent of rural households have incomes below the Scottish Low Pay Unit threshold, and well over half of employed women in rural areas are low paid, compared with under 50 per cent in the urban Central Belt (Strathclyde and Lothian). In the recognition that adults in rural areas are particularly disadvantaged because of the lack of local provision, two taster courses on science and technology were piloted in Scotland which targeted unemployed adults. Recent research has shown that many unemployed adults are unaware of the opportunities in a wide range of science-based jobs and, despite often having the ability, lack the experience or confidence to study science subjects. The results of the pilots showed that there is a demand for such courses. Hence, a pilot project funded by the National Lottery is addressing the problems of adults in rural areas. It includes preparation to access education, training and work, a programme of study, and core skills such as study skills, communications, ICT and jobseeking skills, and has a strong guidance element[25].

In recent years both government and agencies involved in adult guidance have recognised that there is an important link between lifelong learning and effective, impartial guidance. The National Advisory Council for Education and Training Targets (NACETT) (1997) pointed out that it was important for people to do the 'right' learning to get them where they wanted to go, making careers education and guidance vital for people of all ages; but these services remained poor even in about one-third of schools, where provision is statutory. The Dearing Report (1997) recommended widening participation in higher education and the Kennedy Committee (1997, see also Centre for Economic Performance 1997) has emphasised the need to give priority for educational opportunities to those who benefited least from education in the past. One of the key recommendations of the latter is for a national entitlement to a coherent system of information and guidance, as essential to widening participation; and more recently, the Fryer Report (1997) included among its recommendations the following:

> The provision of up-to-date, accessible and impartial information will be essential if a strategy of lifelong learning for all is to be successful.

Clearly, there is already a wide range of agencies operating in the adult guidance field in Britain, offering different levels of guidance (for a valuable annotated list see Rudge 1996). The case of Scotland demonstrates both the official recognition of the value of guidance and the remaining problems.

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[25] For further details, contact Myra Duffy, Scottish Wider Access Programme (West of Scotland Consortium), Allan Glen's Building, 190 Cathedral Street, Glasgow G4 0ND, Scotland.

Scotland
It is in Scotland that policy appears to be most advanced although, as in England and Wales, there is no statutory provision of adult guidance. One significant difference has been the emphasis on the importance of educational guidance for adults returning to learning. The Adult Educational Guidance Initiative Scotland (AEGIS) was set up in 1993 to promote the development of adult guidance in Scotland. Its advisory committee is made up of representatives from further education, higher education, the Scottish *Office Education and Industry Department (SOEID), local authorities, the* National Association of Educational Guidance for Adults (NAEGA), Scottish Enterprise and the Scottish Community Education Council (SCEC). It is supported by both the Scottish Office and Scottish Enterprise. AEGIS has also stated the importance of developing regional guidance networks and has played an active role in establishment of these. Networks exist to share information and resources, exchange ideas on good practice and provide for referral of users (AEGIS 1995, 1996). They have been a major development in adult guidance in the last five years.

The need for effective, holistic guidance has now been widely recognised as having an important contribution to make to the economy and to lifelong learning. The Scottish Skills Forum, launched by Scottish Enterprise in December 1995, was given the task of making recommendations to the government in Scotland for strategies on lifelong learning. Its 'Report and Recommendations' (1996) stated that guidance '... contribute(s) to improving the return from public investment in education and reducing drop-out rates from courses. It has a central role to play in developing and encouraging lifelong learning in Scotland.' The main recommendations were as follow:

- local learning partnerships should exist to meet the needs of particular communities
- the role of ASCETT should be extended to give assistance to those working towards creating an ethos of lifetime learning in Scotland
- guidance should be easily accessible, and a national guidance helpline linked with up-to-date databases would help promote lifelong learning
- guidance networks should be developed and integrated
- guidance should be objective and impartial, and independent of learning providers
- guidance should be provided to defined service and quality standards
- personal development plans should be a key element of the guidance process and all individuals should have access to preparation of such plans at a minimum of once every three years, either through their employers or through local guidance networks; in this process proper recognition should be given to skills acquired through community activity
- technology should be widely adopted to deliver information and support the interview process
- priority should be given to the unemployed seeking work, those entering or returning to the labour market, and those seeking a change in career direction
- 'route maps' of pathways through the qualifications system should be developed and widely displayed, and opportunities for accreditation of prior learning should be highlighted
- charging for guidance should depend on the level and nature of the services provided, with the cost of provision to unemployed people and returners met in part from public funds

In February 1996, at the United Kingdom launch of the European Year of Lifelong Learning in Edinburgh, the then Secretary of State for Scotland announced proposals to establish a national adult guidance helpline in Scotland. This freephone 'Learning Line' was promoted through the *Daily Record* (Scotland's biggest-circulation daily newspaper) and went into operation in September 1997; it has the potential to benefit those who would otherwise be unable to access information on learning and employment and training opportunities, for example those in remote parts of Scotland or those who are unable to meet transport costs involved in visiting a local provider of vocational guidance and counselling. The contract was won by an existing service, Continuing Education Gateway (see case study no. 30).

Careers Services have been directed by SOEID to offer vocational guidance to certain groups of adults. These include adults attending full-time college courses, or attending part-time courses which involve studying to improve job prospects or status, and adults with learning difficulties who have the capacity to be in employment, education or training. Adults who have no specific difficulties, whether employed or unemployed, are not considered as core clients of the Careers Service. Some Careers Services, however, have managed to acquire funding for work which is 'non-core', and are able to offer a limited general adult guidance service. Hence, Glasgow Careers Service can provide adults with careers information, information on further and higher education courses, information about bursaries and grants for studying and contacts for advice about self-employment and voluntary work. It is possible for adults to have a guidance interview with an adult guidance adviser, although this service is limited. There is, however, no vacancy service for adults seeking employment or training opportunities, nor is there any on-going strategic targeting of those at risk of social exclusion.

In 1997 the Scottish Office provided limited-term but generous funding for the establishment of Adult Guidance Networks all over Scotland. The aim, *inter alia*, is to co-ordinate policy, eliminate the useless duplication of services within areas, increase cost-effectiveness, and conduct joint marketing and publicity. These networks are very valuable, in that they generate personal contacts between people in the same field, allow good ideas to be shared, improve communications, enhance inter-agency referrals and lead to co-operative practices, for example, in planning Adult Learners' Week (a nation-wide series of events hosted by the full range of educational providers, and supported by the BBC). A strategic Scottish Guidance Group has also been set up. This could form the basis of a kind of consumer body to protect the interests of learners.

Despite a relatively large amount of provision in Scotland, in the absence of a single statutory provider of adult guidance, there is no uniformity of service. Furthermore there are major concerns about what does exist. The GDA recognises the need for good quality adult careers guidance, which it sees as making a contribution to fulfilling the education and training needs assessed by ASCETT, and has taken a leading role in developing strategy at local level. The challenge facing the GDA and other responsible bodies is clear:

> Careers guidance for those in, or who have recently left, education is the responsibility of the Careers Service. No equivalent agency has that responsibility for adults ... there is no coherent picture of what is on offer, by whom, and to what standard (Glasgow Development Agency 1996).

The perceived difficulties are that there is duplication of service and competition for users in some areas, while in other areas, there is little or no provision. Some staff involved in guidance are unqualified in vocational guidance, and instead have gained training in counselling skills. There is poor provision for those facing redundancy, planning retirement or those seeking a career change or career break. There is lack of guidance on the accreditation of prior learning and psychometric testing is not used widely.

Vocational guidance for adults in Glasgow fails according to the GDA, in the following ways:

- there is fragmentation of delivery
- too much targeting of the unemployed
- no systematic networking
- no common standards with regard to quality

These strictures could be applied to any part of the United Kingdom.

Through the development of the Glasgow Adult Guidance Network, the GDA aims to improve quality of provision, organise collaborate active staff development and place more focus on the need for offering guidance to those in employment, perhaps in a city centre location. Practitioners in Glasgow, as in other parts of the United Kingdom, bring a range of experience and qualifications to the field. The GDA is considering ways of offering vocational training, where appropriate, guidance and information. There is, however, no policy initiative aimed specifically at black and ethnic minority groups, the disabled, the homeless or other groups at risk of social exclusion.

TRAINING PLACES AND QUALIFICATIONS FOR CAREERS ADVISERS

England and Wales

In England and Wales there are eleven institutions which offer the one-year Postgraduate Diploma in Careers Guidance (Part I) course: the universities of Glamorgan, West of England, Huddersfield, Northumbria at Newcastle, East London, Central England, Reading, Manchester Metropolitan University, Nottingham Trent University, South Bank University and the College of Guidance Studies. The main target group for the Diploma courses is graduates, although some entrants have sub-degree qualifications such as a Diploma in Higher Education. A very limited number of entrants hold no higher education awards, and gain entry on the basis of suitable experience. After having completed one year of academic study, Part I of the Diploma in Careers Guidance is awarded. Part II is awarded after a successful period of on-the-job training and development, building on the skills and knowledge developed during Part I. This period usually lasts one year, and must be undertaken in the employ of a careers organisation in an appropriate careers guidance post.

The average intake for these courses is around 25. Some course centres have more than one intake in the course of a year. Some offer Part I the Diploma on a part-time basis. The majority of students who complete Part I of the Diploma in Careers Guidance enter into work with Careers Services involving the core client group: school pupils and school leavers.

As was pointed out by the National Advisory Council for Careers and Educational Guidance (NACCEG) (1995), there was a wide range of quality assurance systems used in guidance services. In October 1995 the National Council for Vocational Qualifications (NCVQ) accredited NVQs for guidance, with practitioner standards established by the Advice, Guidance, Counselling and Psychotherapy Lead Body.

There are currently eleven approved centres in England and Wales which offer NVQs in guidance. Courses are modular and contain work-based elements. Therefore the courses are aimed at those already working in the field. There are no real limits on intake - this depends on the resources of the centre. Completion of NVQ level 4 is needed in order to meet the required level to work as a careers adviser within a careers service organisation. The estimated number of training places in England and Wales is 360.

Scotland

In total there are about 130 careers/educational guidance related training places annually in Scotland. There are three institutions which offer the Postgraduate Diploma in Careers Guidance (Part I). These are the University of Paisley, University of Strathclyde (Glasgow) and Napier University (Edinburgh), and their combined annual intake is 62 students. These courses are offered on a full-time basis. The curriculum is geared towards careers guidance provision for school pupils and school leavers. The majority of students who complete these courses enter into work with young people, although some do find posts in adult guidance, though in most cases greater experience in the field is required.

The University of Strathclyde also offers a Postgraduate Certificate and Diploma in Adult Guidance. There are currently 50 students working towards the Certificate. Around 30 per cent will progress to the Diploma course. The course is offered on a part-time basis and the main target group is those working in adult guidance who do not have a guidance qualification. In addition, Moray House Institute (Edinburgh) now offers a Postgraduate Certificate In Adult Educational Guidance. There are ten places for students. The course is offered on a flexible, part-time basis. The main target group is graduates working in a related area. The University of Paisley offers a very flexible Certificate course, which can lead into the Diploma course. This includes a module in Adult Guidance, also part of the Diploma curriculum. Thus, students are prepared for working with both young people and adults. There are 8 places set aside for the Certificate course.

CONCLUSION

Vocational guidance and counselling is carried out in the United Kingdom by a wide range of practitioners and organisations. No single agency acts as a statutory provider of adult guidance, although local adult guidance networks have brought providers together to share information, ideas on good practice and facilitate appropriate referral of users. At present, there is no nationally or locally agreed professional qualification in adult vocational guidance although a structure exists for careers guidance in general and there are moves towards harmonisation of adult guidance qualifications.

While lifelong learning is still firmly on the political agenda, problems remain for socially excluded groups. Those outwith the labour market have no access to initiatives like employee development schemes. Childcare provision is inadequate and usually costly. Grants and bursaries from central and local government are limited and a stretched voluntary sector struggles to redress the balance.

The single most important barrier to improving participation in learning amongst disadvantaged groups remains finance. The introduction of Individual Learning Accounts and the Adult and Community Learning Fund, which will spend £5m per annum over three years, with matched contributions from charitable trusts and administered by NIACE and the Basic Skills Agency, should be of assistance here. It is necessary, however, for people using these and other opportunities to have access to vocational guidance in order to make the best use of them. One of the barriers to learners in general is finding the appropriate course once the decision to learn is taken (Firth & Goffey 1998; Tamkin & Hillage 1998).

A major problem for adult disadvantaged groups seeking to compete in today's rapidly changing labour market is that independent vocational guidance and counselling, with tried and tested methods for facilitating entry to education, training and employment, has a low profile, is not uniformly available and is often hard to access. There is still a tendency to prioritise vocational guidance for school pupils.

CASE STUDIES

Case study no. 21

LEAD Scotland

LEAD Scotland
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Philosophy

'We exist to empower and enable our users.'

A History, context and general structure

LEAD - Linking Education and Disability was founded in Scotland in 1979 by Edinburgh University Settlement. There are now five branches across Scotland, with the head office in Edinburgh. It is a company limited by guarantee with a board of directors who come from various professions and agencies. This case study focuses on the West of Scotland region, which covers the former Strathclyde Region, Stirling and Dumfries and Galloway.

Funding is year-to-year and comes from SOEID, local authorities and other sources, including the ESF. In recent years funding has fluctuated, but LEAD has now managed to secure a grant from the National Lottery Charities Board to run a three-year national project.

In the West of Scotland there are four part-time members of staff and a team of approximately twenty volunteer tutors. While there are no specific qualifications required by staff, most come from care work, community education or information work backgrounds. Staff appraisals identify the training and development needs of both paid and voluntary staff.

B Functions, target groups and content of the service

LEAD Scotland's mission statement states: 'LEAD Scotland exists to empower and enable physically disabled and/or sensorily impaired adults in Scotland to access education, training and lifelong learning opportunities'.

In working towards this there are six key aims:

1 To provide good-quality, specialist guidance and information about education and training opportunities to physically disabled and/or sensorily impaired adults living in Scotland.

2 To support physically disabled and/or sensorily impaired adults in accessing appropriate education/training.

3 To influence the quality (and appropriateness) of provision on offer to physically disabled and/or sensorily impaired adults from mainstream and other agencies.

4 To involve physically disabled and/or sensorily impaired people in other furtherance of LEAD's mission.

5 To ensure the continued development of LEAD as a key national educational agency demonstrating excellence in the field of equality of access.

6 To harness information technology in pursuit of LEAD's mission.

LEAD in the West of Scotland offers vocational guidance and counselling without charge, to any physically disabled person by means of a telephone helpline. Use is made of appropriate databases for training and educational opportunities. Advocacy can play a part in the process. For example, it may be necessary to contact a college to negotiate a place and make special arrangements for a student. If there are other issues which need to be clarified, for example, welfare/financial, LEAD refers to the relevant organisation, such as the Benefits Agency.

Calls to the helpline are often made by professionals on behalf of disabled adults. Social workers and others need to find accurate and up-to-date information on study opportunities, for their clients. A database of helpline use is maintained for statistical purposes.

Those seeking help from LEAD can take advantage of a computer loan scheme, which is supported by the volunteer tutors who work in the homes of LEAD's clients. At present the loan equipment is very basic.

C Access

Users often hear about LEAD through social work services (25 per cent in a national survey, 1996-97). Word of mouth is also a significant means of finding out about LEAD. LEAD'S own publicity, the Disability Rights Office and PACT (part of the ES), medical services and careers services are other sources. Advertising is limited, but posters and mailings go to colleges, disability organisations, volunteer projects and statutory providers.

Initial contact is made by telephone. The helpline, located in Continuing Education Gateway's premises, is available every Tuesday and Thursday 12.30 p.m. - 4.30 p.m. The main office can be contacted at other times during the week. There are no charges for LEAD's services nor any time limit on access to advice and information.

Home visits are a feature in the Lanarkshire area. Users of the helpline can be referred to the local organiser who can offer home-based support. Tutors work with clients in their homes, helping in a range of subjects, including literacy, numeracy and computing skills.

D Networking

LEAD clearly has close links with Continuing Education Gateway, which enables easy access to accurate, up-to-date information. In the West of Scotland it is a member of adult guidance networks in Glasgow, Renfrew and Lanark. It has a large 'network of friends' which encompasses both individuals and organisations. The latter includes local authorities, blind clubs, charitable trusts and Glasgow Caledonian University.

E Outcomes and assessment

172 calls were made to the helpline in the West of Scotland in 1997. LEAD's students are between 16 and 80 years old, although most are between 31 and 50 years old. Disabilities experienced range from blindness and visual impairment to multiple sclerosis, epilepsy, muscular dystrophy and cerebral palsy. The vast majority of users live in their own homes. A very small minority live in residential/supported accommodation.

Quotes from users from a survey conducted by LEAD:

'Being in contact with LEAD is the best thing that ever happened for me since becoming disabled. I feel LEAD is a wonderful organisation for the work it does for disabled people. I don't know what we would do without people like you. Thank you sincerely one and all.'

'Gave me a new lease of life. I would not have been able to do these courses without you.'

'LEAD has helped me to find and create new interests and attainable goals. I think LEAD, the contacts, and new friends I've made in the short time I've been a student have opened up new horizons for me and my life. I feel that life will never be intimidating or dull.'

LEAD Scotland is a major contributor to the provision of accessible advice and information to adults who have some form of physical disability. A service is offered regardless of what goals the individual has in mind, whether this be a return to the labour market or information on part-time educational opportunities. The service aims to be student-centred, and does take into account a range of needs, although concentrating on vocational and educational ones. The service does not pretend to be capable of meeting other needs, hence the close link with social work and referrals to other agencies where appropriate.

LEAD would like to be able to extend outreach provision to the entire West of Scotland region, using part-time paid local organisers. This would strengthen LEAD's position but would require substantial additional funding. LEAD is currently looking at ways of securing funding, which has been affected by the break up of Strathclyde Regional Council in 1996.

LEAD's West of Scotland branch covers a very large geographical area, much of which is rural. It is able to overcome barriers experienced by people with physical disabilities and those who might suffer from sensory impairments by concentrating on taking advice, information and support to adults in their own homes, by telephone, and in person. A team of volunteer tutors help with a wide range of subjects, including literacy, numeracy skills and computing skills. They can also support learners following distance learning courses.

Case study no. 22

REHAB Scotland

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Philosophy

> 'People with disabilities or otherwise exposed to social exclusion have a right to access services designed to empower them to set goals and enable them to achieve these goals.'

A History, context and general structure

Rehab is a charitable company limited by guarantee, with a volunteer Management Board. It was founded in Dublin in 1949 (Davies 1985) and the Scottish branch started in 1990, merging with a similar organisation called Goodwill Inc. (Glasgow) Ltd. There are 18 centres across Scotland catering for more than 500 trainees a year. A major part of the funding comes from local authority social work departments and health boards, and the European Social Fund under Objectives 2 and 3, and it is supplemented through fund-raising and commercial income (for example, through the Graphic Design section which is run on a semi-commercial basis). In 1996 total revenue was £2.2 million, and it has been increasing. Rehab also operates in Ireland, England (since 1994) and parts of Africa..

There are 110 permanent staff (of whom 98 are full-time), 46 on one-year contracts and six volunteers. Eleven per cent of the staff have disabilities, which is well above the national target of 3 per cent and the 4 per cent that is claimed to exist. Personnel include guidance workers, rehabilitation psychologists, occupational therapists, specialist tutors, placement staff and job coaches. There is both inservice and external staff training, some of which is accredited, such as Training for Trainers and the Diploma in Supported Employment. There are regular meetings in each centre and a programme of cross-centre meetings to consider developing the service has now started.

B Functions, target groups and content of the service

Rehab aims to enable people with disabilities to become more independent, both socially and economically, at best through return to paid work. There are currently services for unemployed people between 16 and 65 years old, with physical and learning disabilities, spinal injury, brain injury, mental health problems, and for the very long-term unemployed. The service covers Glasgow city centre and the outlying areas of Drumchapel and Easterhouse, Paisley, East Kilbride, Aberdeen and Fife. There is also a vocational rehabilitation unit for people in danger of losing their jobs through physical disability or illness. The most recent addition is the Melrose Employment Guidance Agency (MEGA), funded by the intermediate labour market organisation Glasgow Works Initiative for the long-term unemployed, for people over 35 who have been unemployed for more than two years.

Rehab offers a welcoming environment for those with low confidence as well as information, guidance and training. Vocational guidance and counselling is an integral part of all projects, and its impact is reflected in the overall outcomes. Each user goes through an individual person-centred planning process which provides a structured framework for setting goals, identifying needs and determining actions. A match is negotiated between staff evaluation of the user's needs and the user's perception of his/her own needs. Setting positive goals ('I want to be ...') to replace negative self-perceptions is an important step, followed by an individual programme planning system. It is the user, not Rehab, who owns the programme, can object if s/he disagrees with it and has responsibility for it. Concrete actions are agreed on and the user is assisted both by Rehab staff members and external actors such as the family, friends, doctors and social workers. At the end of the agreed period the results are reviewed and evaluated by the user and Rehab.

Feedback continues throughout from questionnaires and interviews. Gender-specific and group counselling are available. In addition to the normal components of professional vocational counselling, and confidence-building, there are sessions on relaxation, communication and anger management.

Rehab delivers its training and work preparation courses in its own centres. There is a wide range of training, from Personal and Social Development through numeracy and literacy to accredited courses in catering, laundry, retailing, electrical installation and repairs, information technology (IT) and administration. Work behaviours and work-related social skills are also worked on during the courses. Since some of the programmes are run on a semi-commercial basis, trainees undertake real tasks. Work experience placements, with continuing support, are arranged and thereafter a placement team seeks appropriate employment or mainstream training programmes. Guidance and counselling are integral to all courses, and once a user has started a job, continuing guidance is available, normally through job-coaching or follow-through sessions. Rehab will also thoroughly brief employers and fellow employees.

People in the National Spinal Injuries Centre at Glasgow's Southern General Hospital are provided with customised training in a wide range of computer programmes, using the latest Adaptive Technology. Rehab Remanufacturing Services, which recycles domestic electrical goods, operates in an area of long-term unemployment and severe social problems. There is also a 20-week pre-vocational exploration programme, called Fresh Start, for the long-term unemployed suffering from anxiety, stress or depression. The core elements of the programme are career exploration, with an emphasis on realistic employment options but not excluding further education; work-related social and interpersonal skill development; and basic training in IT. This programme has partners in France and Spain, involving regular exchanges between centres.

C Access to the service

Users are a mixture of referred and voluntary. Initially, some phone, some drop in, some receive home visits. The Glasgow branch is in the city centre and most of the training centres are well-served by public transport, either in a central location, in hospitals or on large housing schemes. Referrals come principally from the Social Work Department, which is in touch with the most severely disabled, and occasionally from the Placing Assessment and Counselling Team (PACT) of the ES.

Those with disabilities ought to be known to social work and related services and therefore automatically receive support and guidance but in practice many slip through the net. General medical practitioners in particular are not trained to assess needs beyond the medical, so there are problems over access requiring positive efforts by Rehab to make the service known.

Hence Rehab sees PR as very important, and it is advertised by means of leaflets, posters, Open Days and the press, and through Rehab personnel networking and speaking at meetings, both with statutory and voluntary bodies. There are also outreach initiatives, mainly to those suffering brain injuries. Word of mouth is an important way by which people find out about Rehab. It is clear, then, that networking, both formal and informal, is a major key to increasing access.

Any eligible person may use the service, subject to the funding being available. It is free to individuals and users normally receive an attendance allowance, travel costs and childcare costs (there is no on-site provision). Some centres provide lunch. Normally an individual may use Rehab for a maximum of three years.

An innovative access initiative is the Open Doors Café, a social firm which started in 1995 in a Glasgow shopping area. This is potentially a point of first contact for people with a range of disabilities, though its main function is to help learning disabled people prepare for work in the open labour market by working in a cafe run along commercial lines and managed by a catering tutor. Some are also studying for qualifications in catering. Trainees learn not only the rules and regulations concerning safety, hygiene and so on, but also communicating with the public, work discipline and social skills. Currently there are nine trainees but if this pilot project continues to do well, it is envisaged that other similar cafés will be opened.

For Robert, aged 24, it is 'very good - I can do the till, I can cook meals, I can take money to the bank, I can serve the public'. He had been told about the Café by his Adult Training Centre (ATC - day centre for people with disabilities), applied and passed the job interview.

Barry, aged 36, spent years unemployed and without receiving adequate training: 'The ATC was the worst place I've ever gone to'. He finally took some courses at a College of Further Education. Then a friend told him about Rehab Goodwill and after some years in a Rehab electrical goods shop he moved to the Café: 'I've learnt a great deal ... communicating with the public, taking orders ... I like serving, I like clearing up after people ... (Without Rehab) 'I would be stuck at home, stuck for things to do, stuck for things to occupy my mind'. He now plans to move into mainstream employment, using the experience and skills he has gained with the Café.

Jackie, aged 24, had had support from the Social Work Department since leaving school and worked at a series of sheltered employment providers. A member of staff at her hostel had told her about Rehab and Jackie spoke warmly of the Social Work Department but her experience of the Employment Service was not happy. Far from recognising that she had special needs, 'they were always asking me why I didn't have a job'. She now has her own home, supported by a befriender from the Housing Association, and enjoys her work at the Café: 'It's giving you a chance to get outside.'

Not only is the Café an opportunity for disabled people to do 'real' work, it is an opportunity for the public to see what they are capable of and potentially to spread the message that help does exist for learning disabled people. It is probably also in this sense that this is an access initiative.

D Networking

This is regarded as extremely important. Good links are maintained with other voluntary agencies such as Glasgow Works, local economic development agencies, local government, local employers, the ES, Local Enterprise Councils (LECs), National Brain Injury units, the Association for Mental Health, colleges of further education and so on. There are also joint projects, for example, with Social Work Departments.

Networking is vital for a number of reasons: the sharing of information and methods of helping users; effective advocacy on behalf of users; enlisting the support of employers for work experience placements and ultimately for jobs; placing trainees on mainstream training programmes; and gaining access to those who could benefit from Rehab's services but may not know about them.

E Outcomes and assessment of the service

In 1996 there were 452 users. 182 were discharged, of whom 121 (67 per cent) went on to further education or jobs. 40 per cent acquired full Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs) or City and Guilds. The average length of attendance is between 18 and 24 months. 'All Rehab Scotland's trainees are a success story in their own right, as no price can be placed on improvements to an individual's potential, however small' (Rehab Scotland Annual Report 1996).

'Success' should be regarded as helping people become more socially and economically independent, and fortunately the ESF regards the attainment of more personal autonomy or participation in voluntary work as well as of qualifications or employment as successful outcomes. What is critical is that users begin the process of movement, and the high percentage who go on to further education or employment is evidence that Rehab does aid this process. In particular, nearly all trainees in the Brain Injury Vocational Centres and Rehab Remanufacturing Services return to work. The service is holistic and person-centred, and the needs addressed include environmental (social, built etc.), educational, cognitive, medical, psychosocial and psychomotor, as well as vocational.

It has, however, proved difficult to attract ethnic minorities, particularly Asians, to Rehab's services, so the organisation is now implementing a strategy to make its services better known by and more accessible to people from ethnic minority backgrounds. Finding continued funding is always time-consuming and difficult, and funding is always limited relative to the growing need for the service. One element of funding is through United Kingdom Charity Lotteries, which has faced competition since the institution of the British National Lottery with its large prizes.

Case study no. 23

Routeways

Routeways to Jobs, Education and Training

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Philosophy

'Access to jobs, education or training is necessary to help disadvantaged people to improve their life chances.'

A History, context and general structure

Routeways was inaugurated in 1995 by Strathclyde Regional Council and Renfrew District Council. It is now part of Renfrewshire Economic Development, a division of Renfrewshire Council. The Management Board consists of representatives of the Social Work Department, Careers Partnership, Renfrewshire Enterprise (a LEC), the ES and people from the local community. It has four years' funding under the Urban Programme (75 per cent) and the local authority (25 per cent), with ESF funding (representing 2 per cent of the total) on an annual basis. In 1996 total funding was £162,600; any increase in this is limited to the rate of inflation. Routeways is shortly to be merged with Cart Corridor Employment and Ferguslee Park Training and Employment Partnership, under a new name but using the same ethos and approach, and covering all eleven Areas for Priority Treatment (APTs) in Renfrewshire.

Routeways has six full-time and two part-time staff on long-term contracts, and these have experience in counselling, guidance and training. All staff participate in both inservice training and external courses, from IT training through Higher National Certificate (HNC) to postgraduate.

B Functions, target groups and content of the service

The function of Routeways is to assist residents in priority areas (that is, the most deprived 10 per cent of areas of multiple deprivation in Scotland), whether unemployed or seeking to change job or careers, to access the jobs, education or training that can help them to improve their life chances. Those in priority areas represent the greatest concentration of unemployment, including long-term unemployment, and the service is directed at those most in need, in places convenient to them. Hence, it is brought to the client, is free and voluntary, and aims to give personal, financial and technical support. One post specialises in 18-25 years olds (a group with a particularly high incidence of unemployment). Most clients come voluntarily though some are referred.

Employment counselling is seen as a relationship with users, which needs to be built up and nurtured. This individual labour market counselling, confidence-building and motivating are important aspects of the service. There are also group counselling (including women-only) in self-awareness, assertiveness and courses on job search, social care and IT skills. Training is delivered by staff from Routeways and One Plus (see case study 24), except for IT training which is delivered by the local FE college. Childcare facilities are offered to people attending courses. Financial assistance is offered from an 'Activator' fund for training, clothing, tools, fares to attend interviews and so on.

C Access

All services are free and without limit of time, continuing to be available after a user has found employment. An important feature of the service is its determination to have a high profile in the area, through advertisements in the press and on radio, its newsletter and leaflets written in plain English, Open Days, Fundays, even by knocking on doors. In a joint venture with Renfrewshire Careers Partnership Ltd, an adult guidance point is set up one Saturday a month in Johnstone Town Centre.

The service is also advertised through the project vehicle, a bus, which acts as a mobile billboard both to people seeking employment and to employers. Guidance is carried out on the bus, which visits areas of high unemployment. There are tea and coffee-making facilities and a mobile phone on the bus. Job vacancies collected each morning from the ES are displayed, along with vacancies notified direct by employers, posters and leaflets about the service and about local education and training providers, careers books, all newspapers which carry local recruiting advertisements and *Scottish Recruitment*. A laptop computer carries the Gateway and Training Access Point (TAP) databases and can also access the Web, where job vacancies with application forms are displayed. Adult Directions is also available for users, which allows them self-assessment of their wants and needs, likes and dislikes, and provides a printout of suitable occupations. If the bus is off the road, users may telephone and arrange to meet a counsellor within half an hour. Home visits are offered where needed (though the issue of staff safety militates against this being a frequent occurrence). The forthcoming merger should also increase access through covering a larger area.

Apart from the bus, there are other outreach initiatives. Appointments can be made to meet users at a time or place which suits them, for example, in community education building, community houses, LDCs. One particular outreach initiative of interest is a regular visit by an Employment Counsellor, Aileen Patterson, to the Barrhead Women's Centre, which itself runs or hosts courses and has an Employment Development Worker, Fiona Sinclair. She posts the Appointments pages of a variety of newspapers in the main lounge area and three times a week she collects notes of vacancies from the local Job Centre. The Women's Centre has a crèche facility. A group of women at the Centre recounted their experience of guidance. All found out in the first instance from the Women's Centre, and none had received information about guidance services from any other source.

In effect, there is a productive partnership between the two organisations. Aileen pointed out: 'It's been a joint service between the Women's Centre and ourselves ... I wouldn't have met any of them otherwise ... the ongoing support is also a joint function ... I feel it's Routeways in partnership with the Women's Centre that has served people - the strength is in the partnership. And there's a supportive, user-friendly environment ... and there's the crèche facility.' Linda agreed: 'Yes, I would have come to the bus for an appointment but it was much better coming here.' It is clear that the fact that it is a Women's Centre makes it more accessible to women, who feel more comfortable there than they would in a more formal setting.

Mary (aged 27): 'I came in one morning and Fiona told me Aileen from Routeways was here ... 'I wasnae sure what I wanted to do ... I'd been a factory worker for years ...

if you feel like a change of career, it did help me to change jobs ... when I look at my CV I think, "what a wonderful person, I'd like to meet this person"! ... It does give me confidence, it gives me encouragement ... It's been good. I actually tell quite a lot of people to go to Routeways now ... even now a lot of people don't even know what a CV is.'

Jackie (aged 38) had previously seen an advertisement for One Plus (see Case Study 000): 'It was advertised in the Women's Centre and we went along to the Open Day.' She subsequently did a business administration course there: 'I found it really helpful because they were offering child care - that's why I went on the course ... I think the CV part as well, and the ongoing support are very helpful ... Aileen set up a voluntary job for me, one day a week, because employers want practical experience ... she gave me confidence, she made me believe in myself.'

Janet (aged 22): 'Aileen came in and sat down and I started asking her advice on a CV. She told me of a job coming up and she got me an interview. I went for the interview and got the job!' She subsequently left that job, but 'I'd got the confidence now to go on ... Aileen helped me with interview skills, and it gave me confidence when I went to the interview. I was a bag of nerves but it really helped ... Knowing there's someone there to support you, there behind you ... She fired me up ... even if you don't believe in yourself, you know that she believes in you and it gives you that boost ... It made me feel better in myself, that I could do anything I wanted to do ... it made me broaden my working life - there's more than hairdressing! I'm not just stuck in the one place ... A lot of folk don't really look at what they're capable of doing ... I just feel as if I've achieved quite a lot - I've come forwards. I felt as if I was going backwards for a while ... I didn't think I'd be able to take that step forwards into the big world of work ... I now have a lot of confidence and self-esteem.'

Linda (aged 29): I think the New Beginnings started me and that got me the confidence to move on ... it was a course run here and it just gave me the confidence, the assertiveness ... practice in writing application forms, mock interviews ... they put you on a work placement as well ... then frae there I moved on to Aileen ... I still didnae know what I needed to do now, I just needed to work ... Now I'm working and I'm happy in it, but before I met Aileen I wasnae really sure, I was just hovering ... I'm in the School Meals Service now and it's just perfect ... I'd been in the home for five years and you just think you're totally useless, you don't think you've anything to offer. But when Aileen helped me with my CV it just looked fantastic! ... I think the best thing for me - you know the times when you feel you just want to gie up, Aileen doesn't give up so you cannae! ... I think it helped me achieve - what can I say? I'm mair contented now ... because I don't think I could have went out to work without help to get me there.'

Other outreach possibilities being considered include enrolment evenings at community education centres, the Barrhead Internet Café, the Foxbar Women's Project and Foxbar Men's Project, Unemployed Workers' Clubs, family centres, nursery Open Days - in other words, wherever people go, at the times they go there.

D Networking

Routeways has co-operative links with Community Education, the Careers Service, the ES, ReDirect (the guidance service of Renfrewshire Enterprise) and Reid Kerr College of Further Education. It is a member of the Renfrewshire Adult Education Guidance Network (representing all areas of education which deal with adults, from informal to higher education, and organisations furthering the interests of people with disabilities) and the East Renfrewshire Adult Education Forum. Most adult guidance networks in Scotland receive government funding through the Scottish Office, and the Renfrew Adult Guidance Strategic Network of practitioners and policymakers has received £250,000 for the next three years. The aim is to co-ordinate policy, eliminate the useless duplication of services within areas, increase cost-effectiveness, conduct joint marketing and publicity etc. These networks are very valuable, in that they generate personal contacts between people in the same field, allow good ideas to be shared, improve communications, enhance inter-agency referrals and lead to co-operative practices, for example, in planning Adult Learners' Week (a nation-wide series of events hosted by the full range of educational providers, and supported by the BBC).

E Outcomes and assessment

In September 1997 there were 300 registered users of the service but the actual number was higher, as Routeways does not refuse to help people living outwith the designated area. Although counsellors often hear informally of former users gaining jobs, and users receive enquiring letters for a year after they leave the service, this information is inevitably incomplete. In October 1997 Routeways tracked past users through a mailed questionnaire, with self-addressed envelopes and a £50 prize draw to encourage response. Out of 228 people sent questionnaires, 98 responded, a rate of 40.3 per cent (quite good for a mailed survey, especially given the high rate of mobility in working-class areas). Positive outcomes include any form of education, training or employment. The current situations of the 42 men and 75 women who responded are summarised in the following table:

Table 13. Outcomes for Routeways clients to 1997

	Men %	Women %	All %
In full-time paid work	40.5	13.3	23.1
In part-time paid work	4.8	21.3	15.4
On a training course	4.8	8.0	6.8
In voluntary work	2.4	6.7	5.1
On a college/university full-time course	2.4	6.7	5.1
On a college/university part-time course	2.4	4	3.4
Signing on as unemployed	38.1	4	16.2
Unemployed but not registered	4.8	17.3	12.8
Parent with pre-school age child	0	18.7	12.0
Total	100.2	100	99.9

Thus, 53.8 per cent of all respondents reported positive outcomes, with little overall difference between the men and the women. Predictably, the men were much more likely than the women either to be in full-time paid employment or unemployed; and women were more likely than men to be in part-time employment, increasing their qualifications or caring for small children. Given the high local unemployment rate and the low skill base of the area, these outcomes are very encouraging.

The service is voluntary, without the coercive element inherent in the ES, it is local, accessible, free and well-staffed and resourced. The direct financial help it is able to give is a distinct benefit, which recognises that a major impediment both to returning to learning and to seeking or starting employment is all lack of money. As a 'one-stop' shop it can offer a range of services to help people prepare for and obtain employment.

This is a relatively new service, and there are still areas for development; for example, the (self-) assessment of skills, abilities and experiential learning and the development of personal and career plans. LEC funding requires the service have SQMS status, for which Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) is necessary, and this would both help users and increase financial resources. Currently it is limited to a defined geographical area (though people from outwith that area who drop in to the service are equally welcomed), but the plans to extend it to a wider area should improve matters. The bus is quick to set up and very visible, but not ideal for training purposes. There is no crèche or entirely private interview room, and it is expensive to run and maintain. An exhibition trailer would be preferable. The current funding for the Women's Centre ends in September 1998 and it faces an uncertain future. It is clearly important to develop further outreach initiatives and partnerships. One innovative feature is a Web site, which is aimed at employers, which whom Routeways maintains close links, including offering a local recruitment service.

Case study no. 24

One Plus One Parent Families

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Philosophy

'Lone parents must be involved at all levels of the organisation, and not just as clients.'

A History, context and general structure

One Plus was founded in 1980 by the organisation then called the Scottish Council of Single Parents (now One Parent Families Scotland). Originally a Social Work organisation funded by Urban Aid, it is now funded from a variety of sources: the ESF, local authorities and LECs together contribute nearly 65 per cent of the funding, with the rest coming from local development companies, charitable trusts, fund-raising and the Scottish Office Urban Programme. Funding periods range from one to four years. Overall income has increased (from £709,204 in 1994 to £1,963,825 in 1997), though local government reorganisation meant a significant drop in the proportion contributed by local social work and education departments. It now has seven branches. Represented on the Management Board are lone parents, who form the majority, local councillors and professionals such as social workers and lawyers.

One Plus has 60 full-time and 90 part-time paid staff on permanent contracts and five voluntary staff. The basic qualities required of staff are an understanding of the issues, commitment to voluntary sector work, ability to work in the One Plus team setting and ability to work with people at different levels. Staff come from backgrounds in social work, community work, the health service, training, childcare, teaching, further education and community business. Where job applicants are equally qualified preference is given to lone parents, and a high proportion of the staff are lone parents. Training, both inservice and external, is available to all staff, whether paid or voluntary.

B Functions, target groups and content

One Plus aims to provide for the West of Scotland a wide range of services developed in partnership with lone parents to address the range of issues that they confront. Vocational guidance and counselling, training and groupwork are among the main activities but One Plus also provides a social work and an information service to adults, attempts to influence policy and campaigns on behalf of lone parents. Although lone parents constitute the target group and the great majority of users, some activities are open to other unemployed persons.

Pre-vocational training and accredited courses (Scottish Vocational Qualifications) with integral personal development and vocational guidance and counselling are given in childcare, social care, administration, business studies and personal development. Courses include work placements, giving vital job experience. They are delivered by either by One Plus or local colleges. They are free, including childcare by qualified persons, and travel expenses and a weekly allowance are granted to participants. Pre-vocational training is seen as crucial to rebuilding confidence by validating life experience, recognising skills, identifying childcare options and informing on training/education opportunities. Courses include six-day New Horizons courses in local communities, including a course customised for the hearing-impaired; and 16 week First Steps training courses in areas of deprivation. One vital element, given the complexity (and frequent changes) in the relationship between state benefits and earnings and the necessity for childcare, consists of pre-course personal calculations for each user to assess whether it is financially viable for her to take the course and go on to employment.

The service is in partnership with John Wheatley College on Community Connections, an Urban Aid-funded outreach project in Greater Easterhouse (a large housing scheme with multiple deprivation) targeting women, lone parents and the unemployed. This addresses several needs: information about training options; encouragement for people to enter education and training and support for those who do, to reduce the high drop-out rate; short 'taster' courses in subjects of interest to local people (such as personal development, photography, arts and crafts, catering and childcare) to help people gain confidence; 20-week 'Moving On' courses offering basic qualifications and intended as 'a step on the ladder to education, training and employment'; free childcare for students, travel and lunch money. Vocational guidance and counselling are integral to the programmes and still available after completion, and are also available, subject to funding, to individuals and non-student groups who require this part of the service. Labour market counselling includes (self-)assessment of experiential learning.

Past users are followed up for around a year, and some become mentors. Ex-trainees provide role models for new trainees and where funding permits mentoring is one-to-one. One Plus also provides employment. In projects such as Community Connections, some ex-students become volunteer workers on the project, and thereby gain valuable work experience in resource, information or administration work. One Plus and the Strathclyde After School Care Association established Kidcare Ltd in 1990, on a commercial basis, and in 1994 in conjunction with Glasgow Works. The majority of participants on these projects go on to formal employment. In addition, sessional workers in the Childcare Service are all ex-trainees from the One Plus training courses.

The Resource Centre and Library, the only specialist centre of its type in Scotland, acts as an important resource for social workers, community workers and students as well as a drop-in facility for individual lone parents and groups. It also includes a Flexible Learning Unit, with computers funded by the National Lottery. Both One Plus trainees and individual lone parents may develop their computer skills, follow an open learning course or use the Web.

One Plus is involved in childcare in the community projects, including afterschool care services, and supports voluntary groups. It is a campaigning and lobbying organisation and also acts as advocate for individual lone parents with agencies such as the Housing Department, the Department of Social Services, the Child Support Agency, the Health Boards, the Social Work Departments and the local colleges. It produces and disseminates information leaflets for lone parents in each of the twelve new council areas, concerning state benefits, legal matters, local childcare facilities and contact details for a range of relevant local services. It runs an advice and counselling service for children and teenagers. It supports the setting up and running of lone parent groups. The premises are used in the evenings and at weekends by local groups and the Social Work Service to Adults and Children.

C Access

Users commonly find out about the service by word of mouth (42 per cent in the evaluation survey), but extensive efforts are made to advertise the existence of the service and the help it can give and One Plus has both a Press Officer and an Information Officer, to keep up the profile of the service and respond to requests for information about it. Leaflets are sent to women's and lone parents' groups currently using the centre, community centres, information centres, colleges, nursery schools and pre-five centres, the Community Relations Council, ethnic minority organisations. Advertising is placed in local newspapers and on posters, and attempts are made to obtain press coverage, preferably in the widely-read tabloids, though it is more difficult to persuade these to provide coverage than the broadsheets. Of the sample surveyed, about one-fifth had found out about One Plus through local press information and advertisements, one-fifth had been referred by other agencies, and one-fifth had previous involvement with One Plus.

The service is open to all lone parents and is free and voluntary. There is a free and confidential telephone information and advice line and a drop-in service for people seeking vocational guidance. Those on courses receive a modest weekly allowance, childcare and travel expenses. There is a free crèche, funded by ESF or Urban Aid, depending on the course attended. In addition, since an important key to access is childcare, the service is involved in a number of childcare projects.

A particularly innovative publicity generator is the 'Lone Rangers', the One Plus drama group which writes and performs a variety of satirical sketches, intended as an antidote to negative stereotyping of lone parents. The group is in great demand at social functions, women's events, health projects, conferences and Annual General Meetings. The city centre location is accessible and pleasant, and if necessary One Plus will pay fares for people to come in. Home visits are offered where necessary, though principally by the Social Work and Children and Young Persons workers. There are also several outreach initiatives in rural areas, deprived inner-city areas and outlying housing schemes in the West of Scotland. One example is Community Connections

Community Connections, Greater Easterhouse, Glasgow

This is a partnership between One Plus and John Wheatley College. It holds Information Sessions and Open Days in local halls and centres; gives advice sessions for voluntary groups on their own premises; and delivers a range of courses, including 'Moving On' which includes vocational guidance. In collaboration with Glasgow Parks and Recreation Department and other local groups, Community Connections took part in the Auchinlea Fun Day Gala Event which attracted 6,500 people, and the students on the first course organised a fun day and disco in a local primary school, which both advertised the project and formed part of their training. The Community Connections 'Moving On' course team found that 82 per cent of the students went on to jobs, further education or training (Community Connections 1997).

D Networking

One Plus has co-operative links with local employers, local economic development agencies, Routeways (see Case Study 23), the Scottish Trades Union Congress, Save the Children; Community Education and many more, including the many lone parent groups in the West of Scotland; and is in a number of networks, including: the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations; One Parent Families Scotland; the United Kingdom Home Care Association; the Glasgow Council for the Voluntary Sector; the Women, Poverty and Health Group; the Equality Committee Issues Group; the Lesbian Mothers Group and the Poverty Alliance.

E Outcomes and assessment

Over 200 people per week use the centre, not counting those on ESF courses, and in addition each outreach development officer visits several groups per week, seeing perhaps 60 to 80 people. None of the sample surveyed were employed prior to starting courses and only 11 per cent were involved in education. The vast majority hope to obtain a job or at least improve their job prospects; but, typically of adult learners, they accrue unexpected but valuable benefits of increased confidence and new friendships to break their isolation. The service is targeted and tailored to the needs of lone parents. It aims to be flexible and supportive, while meeting current labour market needs. Labour market research and contact with local employers means that training courses are geared to areas where jobs actually exist. One Plus emphasises the need to be as holistic as possible, particularly since most people make their first contact soon after marriage breakdown or at times of financial difficulty. Thus users often have emotional, financial and/or legal difficulties.

An evaluation by Glasgow City Council in April 1997 of the training activities of One Plus suggests that One Plus is achieving most of its aims (Maguire 1997). It found high levels of satisfaction, high pass rates (80 per cent) and low drop-out rates (5 -10 per cent depending on the course). Most of the 26 per cent sample of users, all female, stated that they had acquired more self-confidence as well as gaining qualifications and enhancing their employment prospects, in a supportive environment. Although only one-third of those surveyed stated they were now employed the cost per job at £4,200 indicates value for money. Furthermore the majority had used no other agencies and felt they would not have gained employment if they had not done the course. Those on the 'First Steps' course (half the sample) saw it, correctly, as a first stepping-stone rather than a fast route to a job. Other agencies who had been involved with One Plus also held it in high regard as a very helpful, hardworking and innovative organisation with unrivalled expertise in the field, offering training for employment in areas with real job prospects. By setting up childcare provision and training women, some of whom become registered childminders, One Plus is directly helping lone parents to take up employment.

The complex web of funding and the abolition of the Regional Council, requiring negotiation with twelve separate authorities instead of one, means that resources have to go into fund-raising and administration that could be better spent on improving the staff-student ratio. This can lead to cashflow problems (experienced by all voluntary organisations), and year-to-year funding arrangements inhibit long-term strategic thinking. One Plus would prefer to follow users up for more than a year, since outcomes may be delayed beyond that by a number of circumstances and aftercare may be needed. There was some concern also that the level of training offered, though appropriate to the users' initial qualification level, could lead only to relatively poorly-paid jobs, and it was recommended that one job of an 'aftercare' programme could be to guide users who wished to progress further. The problem, as usual, is financing this.

Sometimes there are language problems as the service has no interpreters or bilingual workers. This is unfortunate, because where a marriage breaks down, women from ethnic minorities often find themselves without the support of their community, are unable to use One Plus because of language difficulties and either exist without help or use smaller voluntary services (such as Meridian, see case study 25) without the resources or relatively secure future of One Plus. Furthermore, although One Plus exchanges leaflets in Urdu, Punjabi and Chinese with ethnic minority organisations, they do not share expertise or have informal contacts with them. Indeed, the evaluation study suggested that One Plus needs to be more proactive generally in sharing its innovative ideas and practices, so that these are adopted by more generic services as well as by smaller agencies.

Case study no. 25

Meridian: Black and Ethnic Minority Women's Information and Resource Centre

Meridian: Black and Ethnic Minority Women's
Information and Resource Centre

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Opening hours: 0900 - 1700

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Philosophy

> 'Authentic help means that all who are involved help each other mutually, growing together in the common effort to understand the reality which they seek to transform' (Paulo Freire).

A History, context and general structure

Meridian was set up in early 1992 by a group of women from various ethnic minority groups decided that there was a need for a city centre guidance and counselling service with childcare facilities. They obtained Urban Aid funding through the Scottish Office for a 4-year period and became a private limited company with charitable status. The service got under way in 1994. It is now supervised and part-funded by the Social Work Department of Glasgow City Council. In addition, Meridian received financial contributions from Glasgow City Council Chief Executive's Department and Equality Committee, the Wellpark Enterprise Centre, the Commission for Racial Equality, the Glasgow Healthy City Project, the Royal Bank of Scotland, the Black and Ethnic Minority Women's Seminar Group and United Cash and Carry. Total revenue 1996-7 was just under £170,000.

Meridian has six full-time staff, two on jobshare and two part-time, in addition to sessional and volunteer workers. All are from ethnic minorities and the languages spoken include English, Cantonese, Mandarin, Urdu, Hindi and Punjabi. The most important qualities for staff are approachability, sensitivity and empathy.

B Functions, target groups and content

Meridian works with a user group which is exclusively black or ethnic minority female, living within APTs. It acts as a resource centre providing information and advice, counselling and referrals, education and training and the teaching of English. The latter is vital to improve access to information and advice, improve educational attainment, improve health, help community identity and organisation, reduce individual isolation and increase social interaction, improve self-confidence, help provide access to jobs and reduce employer bias. To these ends, Meridian aims to create a framework within which women can make decisions, to provide developmental activities within an ethos of self-worth, value and respect and to encourage and support women to realise their potential in an empathic setting.

The service takes a holistic approach, based on the social and personal context of women seeking vocational guidance and counselling. Thus, in addition to individual labour market counselling, Meridian acts as counsellor of first resort for a range of problems (marriage/family issues, housing, family health, children's education, emergency support services, nationality and immigration issues) but refers users to specialist agencies where appropriate. There is a helpline. Staff visit Department of Social Services (DSS) offices, housing, welfare and benefits departments, sometimes accompanying users and performing an advocacy role.

Classes in a wide range of subjects (including English language, healthy diet and cooking, exercise classes, sewing and IT) are provided by the City of Glasgow CES, the City of Glasgow Parks and Recreation Department, and Langside and John Wheatley Colleges, Glasgow.

C Access

The City Centre location, close to a major shopping centre, allows Meridian to serve women from all parts of the city. The emphasis is on providing a safe, warm and above all confidential environment. The number of women attending has been increased by staff visits to APT areas and agencies, health centres, schools and shopping centres, by making home visits and by advertising in community newspapers in a variety of languages. Separate surveys of the needs of African Caribbean and South Asian women, and of women seeking to set up their own businesses, have led to enhanced collaboration with other organisations and a higher profile for Meridian.

Childcare is an important aspect of access, and Meridian prides itself on providing good-quality childcare while mothers attend classes. The children not only receive care but are also prepared for nursery and primary school. Women's transport to the Centre is paid where necessary, as city transport is extremely expensive.

D Networking

Networking is an important strand of Meridian's activities: to prevent duplication of services whilst maximising provision and total resources; to generate knowledge about Meridian and thus enhance access; to forge friendly relationships with other professionals so that women can be referred when necessary to the best and most appropriate agencies .

E Outcomes and assessment

In 1996-7, out of a caseload of 107, the majority were aged 26-60 and of South Asian or African Caribbean origin. The caseload has increased markedly over the last two years, and there is evidence of rising levels of domestic violence. Attendances at the Centre were around 5,500, or 3,000 more than in 1994-5, showing Meridian's increasing success at generating access. The biggest barrier for ethnic minority women, according to Meridian staff, is cultural, in that many do not prioritise education, training or employment.

It is proactive and canvasses users and potential users to find out what services and courses they need. It provides a safe and sympathetic environment, a wide range of activities and a holistic approach. In 1996 Meridian was awarded a certificate for its work in promoting racial equality from the European Commission Scottish Equality Awards, and participated in the Scottish launch of the Commission for Racial Equality Visible Women's Campaign.

Because of the large number of users and range of activities, Meridian has now outgrown its premises. Despite its evident success in increasing access, much time and energy had to be devoted to seeking continuation funding after March 1998. A further problem is that the number of APTs has been reduced and lower priority given to black and ethnic minority issues since the loss of the Regional Council, so it is even harder for ethnic minority organisations to establish themselves. Voluntary agencies like Meridian are performing, in difficult circumstances and with short-term funding, services which, arguably, mainstream agencies should be providing. Many questions Meridian is asked could better be answered by the Citizens Advice Bureaux and two other services in these case studies report little take-up from ethnic minorities. This appears to be largely because of poor networking on their part with ethnic minority organisations and lack of bilingual workers. If dedicated services like Meridian lose their funding, mainstream or more secure services will have to adapt to including ethnic minorities - or ethnic minorities will find themselves further excluded. There is clearly a need for lobbying mainstream services and teaching them how to become more inclusive.

Case study no. 26

Flourish House

Flourish House
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Philosophy

'Staff and participants are equals.'

A History, context and general structure

In 1992 the Glasgow Association for Mental Health (GAMH) inaugurated a vocational guidance project called STEP. Activities were overseen by a steering group composed of representatives from social work, the health board, GAMH, the business community, mental health officers and members of the project (i.e. participants). In 1997 STEP merged with and became the education and employment unit of a new GAMH project - the Glasgow Clubhouse (named Flourish House).

The Clubhouse model was founded in New York in 1947 and is a service with clear ideas about community rehabilitation for people with long-term mental illness. Its activities include confidence- and skill-building, vocational guidance, access to education, work placements, advocacy and social/cultural activities. Flourish House receives funding (approximately £200,000 per year) from the Greater Glasgow Health Board (GGHB) and the Mental Health Foundation. The funding from the GGHB now matches ESF funding for the project.

The project has seven full-time members of staff plus one part-time member of staff who is a self-employed careers adviser. Qualities required of staff are mainly practical skills and the right attitude. These are more important than having a background in mental health. Through involvement with Clubhouse, all members of staff must follow a three-week training programme focusing on the philosophy of the service, with particular emphasis on the equal status of professionals and participants. Staff also attend Clubhouse conferences and other training courses according to particular training needs. Policy meetings are attended by staff and members. Members must be involved in any decisions which alter the running of the programme and also attend training courses.

B Functions, target groups and content

The project is open to any adult with a mental health problem in the north and west of Glasgow, and members of ethnic minority communities and homeless people from any area. The main aim of the project is to provide vocational rehabilitation for adults suffering from mental illness. Forms of mental illness include anxiety, depression, psychosis and schizophrenia.

There is commitment to a step-by-step approach towards rehabilitation. Staff work with participants as equals and there is no pressure on members to carry out tasks with which they are uncomfortable. The project takes a holistic approach, with an emphasis on personal development, confidence-building and a social programme as well as finding suitable outcomes at the end of the rehabilitation period. Flourish House offers adults with mental health problems the opportunity to participate in a training programme which usually lasts for approximately 30 weeks, although members do not have to complete this amount of training. There is flexibility and recruitment to the project is ongoing.

There is a range of aspects to the project, which allows members to choose sections which are most appropriate to their needs. These different sections are known as groups. The details of these are as follows:

- job search groups include: CV preparation, letter writing, application forms, careers interviews, the use of a careers library and support with individual investigation of options
- 'return to study' groups: study skills, time management, money management and essay writing
- personal development: confidence-building; assertiveness; stress management; motivation; attitudes and self-esteem
- numeracy and literacy: if necessary members can have support with these key skills
- work experience: this can be undertaken within the Education and Employment unit premises or other units in Flourish House and includes tasks such as photocopying, mail shots, administration and recording of tasks carried out
- basic Scotvec modules: support services in the community, job search and investigating careers
- option-seeking: skills and analysis; careers interest guides; speakers; and visits to colleges, volunteer services and places of employment

The final part of the programme involves the uptake of options. These could be employment, college courses, open learning or voluntary work. These programmes are delivered in group work settings. Confidentiality is guaranteed for members who participate in one-to-one advice and counselling. This includes vocational guidance with the project's careers adviser, who also delivers much of the group work involved in the project. Those who join Flourish House are lifelong members of Clubhouse. This means that they are able to access facilities and services at any time, even after having completed training on the programme. Facilities include a café, newspapers for job adverts, access to computers, information on work placements, access to social events and full participation in the running of the course. ESF money provides about one year of expenses for members.

Social events are organised in the evening, and include visits to the theatre and cinema. It is planned to extend the possibilities by having week-end opening. Within all the activities within Flourish House, there is a commitment to genuine equality and partnership between staff and members. The project caters for individual needs, as opposed to offering directive group work.

C Access to the service

Users are largely referred to the project, although there is an element of self-referral. Medical endorsement is required. There is no compulsion: it is important that people choose to become members. Referrals come from hospitals, GAMH, voluntary organisations, doctors and other medical practitioners. Although there is no real PR activity to publicise the project, GAMH circulates information to resource centres, and there is on-going liaison with the agencies referred to above. Staff and members do presentations on request. Initial contact for those interested in the project is usually by letter or telephone to arrange an appointment time. It is also possible for people to drop in.

There are no charges made for any of the services offered to members and expenses for travel and lunch are provided. There is some financial help for social events and attendance at particular training programmes. The project's present base is in the West End of Glasgow but in the near future the Education and Employment Unit will join the rest of Flourish House which is in a more central location. These premises are larger, and contain a café. There are workshops, and an outreach programme targets those who have stopped attending or who have been admitted to hospital.

Thomas, formerly homeless, made the following comments on his experience so far on the project: 'It's a softly, softly approach with coming back to work, and getting my own house. I'm trying to get into employment. There's not many jobs for people like us.....finding somewhere that could take us on.:..with an understanding ... Hopefully my confidence and self-esteem will improve....there is a chance of work on Glasgow Works. I've gained four certificates ... It gets me to mix with people. I'm not used to mixing with people.'

Penny, an ex-nurse: 'It's given me up-to-date references....because I've been unemployed for so long. I found the personal development stuff really helpful. I found out what I could do....things I could do to pull myself out.'

Others preferred not to be named.

'Everybody is treated the same, you're accepted in here, without any question. we don't get crap in here. We're treated as second class citizens. They [outside world] don't give you a second chance. You've got a lot of fights. Now I would argue and fight back. You've got to fight to get help.'

'Not many places available to people who have suffered from mental health. Too many people stay in the house.'

Flourish House also raises funds from the public, which has the added advantage of raising the profile of the project and potentially reaching more people in need of its services. For example, a ceilidh (a traditional dance event) was held on its opening and advertised in, among others, the local Baptist Church Magazine which put this on its website.

D Networking

The Education and Employment Unit of Flourish House is a member of the Glasgow Adult and Guidance Network. There is close liaison with local employers for work placements, and with colleges for information on suitable courses. Contact is maintained with other Clubhouses, local voluntary organisations and members of medical professions involved in working with adults suffering from mental health problems.

E Outcomes and assessment of the service

Members are between the ages of 25 and 65, although Flourish House works with adults of any age. The target number for the new project in a one-year period is 100. In the last year the actual number was 80.

The project is not driven by targets with regard to entry to the labour market. There is a pragmatic approach to rehabilitation. Confidence-building is regarded as a goal in itself. The project takes a modern approach to the concept of mental health and those who have a history of mental health difficulties. It recognises that mental health projects in the past have reinforced the labelling of individuals, and have concentrated too much on getting the most out of the state benefits system for individuals rather than adopting a positive approach and looking at what each individual can achieve, with attention being paid to the steps involved in reaching particular goals.

The service offered is genuinely holistic. Vocational, social and mental needs are identified for each person. It is not just a 9-5 project: the social programme is innovative and considered an integral part of the project. There is a clear emphasis on confidence-building and life skills. Activities which extend beyond the training centre are offered and delivered only with the consent of the member.

Those who have made use of the unit within Flourish House pay tribute to both members and staff and have commented specifically on the social aspect and confidence-building. Clearly, members benefit from sharing experiences with people in similar circumstances and being treated as equals by members of staff. Staff also benefit from working in partnership with members. They learn about members' skills which can be brought to Flourish House.

Staff members of the project feel that more could be achieved in work with employers. It is felt that some have a poor attitude towards people with a history of mental health problems. It is also felt that some people are restrained by the benefits system, in that they can be caught up in claiming benefits, being forced on to training programmes, then returning to claming benefits. There is thus no real encouragement to return to work, and there is often a fear of relapse if a hasty and unsuccessful return to the workplace is made, which in turn could lead to a loss of the benefit entitlement which took so long to build up in the first place.

The Education and Employment Unit of Flourish House argues that people need a lengthy transition period to prepare them for successful re-entry into the labour market. It thus offers its members a patient build-up and is person-centred.

Case study no. 27

Making Training Work

Making Training Work
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Opening hours: Monday - Friday, 0900-1700
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Philosophy

'People need help to find their way into the system.'

A History, context and general structure

East London has a high unemployment rate, particularly among ethnic minorities. In 1996, the white unemployment rate was 10.6 per cent, compared with 22.5 per cent for minority ethnic groups. The highest rates were among Black Africans (33.6 per cent) and Bangladeshis (43.9 per cent). London as a whole has a large number of homeless people, drawn by the illusory prospect of finding employment or a safe haven from difficulties at home.

Making Training Work (MTW) has been a not-for-profit Company Limited by Guarantee since 1995, established to 'carry on the business of the advancement of education, creating new and enhancing existing education, training and employment opportunities, providing training and advice in the field of language and vocational training programmes, and upon raising funds for such work' (Memorandum of Association of Making Training Work). It was originally set up as a consultancy in 1991 by two former Further Education lecturers responsible for language support, who had worked with the Employment Department and the Bank of England, had great interest in community issues, and saw the need for a service outwith the statutory bodies, particularly with the closure of the London Education Authority (LEA). Originally funded by local Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs) to develop English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), they subsequently received ESF funding and a wide spread of other clients, including the former Inner City Task Forces, City Challenges. The aim was to deliver integrated language support to refugees and members of ethnic minorities, that is, to develop language skills alongside other skills. They subsequently widened their remit to include the homeless and disabled. Total funding in 1997 was around £300,000.

MTW has 10 full-time and 15 part-time staff. Two are administrators, the rest guidance workers and trainers. Most are on short-term contracts. The required qualifications vary according to the project on which they work. Trainers must have diplomas in teaching ESOL, but for guidance staff, attitude and relevant experience are much important than formal qualifications. Staff are expected to be able to 'approach clients' needs with vision and creativity in identifying and accessing opportunities .. enthuse clients and motivate them to achieve goals ... have good interpersonal and communication skills, appropriate to local community groups ... have commitment to equal opportunities' as well as the relevant knowledge, including local knowledge. The nature of the target groups also requires that the guidance staff include at least one Bengali man, one Bengali woman and one Somali speaker. Creativity and skills in dealing with individuals are valued above 'paper qualifications'. All staff are involved in on-going training, and are offered the opportunity to train for the NVQ level 3 in Educational and Vocational Guidance for Adults. External courses are provided principally by the Careers and Occupational Information Centre (COIC) of the DfEE.

B Functions, target groups and content

MTW is an organisation committed to the reduction of social exclusion through access to employment, education and training. It sets out to provide a welcoming atmosphere, and attracts alienated people, such as the homeless, who avoid official services. It offers professional labour market counselling and its training courses have a strong guidance element. In the Bethnal Green Training Centre, MTW in collaboration with East London Advanced Technology Training (ELATT) runs a special drop-in service, Gaining Access to Training and Employment (GATE), where local people can obtain individual guidance, training sessions with integrated guidance, and use of the careers library, job vacancy lists and computers between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. on weekdays. It is funded by Bethnal Green City Challenge (City Challenges were set up as private companies using Structural Regeneration funding). There is a related service for unemployed ethnic minority graduates, the Links Yard Graduate Programme.

MTW has an advocacy unit, and this is an important element in the service rather than an occasional extra. It also reacts to needs expressed by the target groups, and has successfully bid for funding from the ESF to run pre-PLAB courses (for overseas doctors intending to sit the PLAB examination which allows them to practise medicine in the United Kingdom) and courses in management skills for overseas managers, including refugees. It now runs courses in interpreting, in legal, health and education matters, funded by the Urban Learning Foundation with resources from the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC) and free for people in the voluntary sector or unemployed. Optional accreditation from the London Open College Federation is offered. There are two projects for the homeless, described separately below.

C Access

MTW's office and most of the training suites are located near Brick Lane, an area with a high concentration of ethnic minorities. Leaflets, including some in local community languages such as Bengali and Somali, are circulated via ELATT and stalls are set up on request at local events. Formerly MTW advertised in the local free newspaper, but this is no longer necessary as the service is now over-subscribed. Outreach workers attend the Tower Hamlets Summer University and events held by community-based organisations, and visit local community education classes and day centres and hostels for the homeless. Most commonly, people hear by word-of-mouth - 'success is the best publicity!'

All the services are free and without limit of time (except for specific courses), with wage subsidies on relevant schemes, free lunches on homeless projects and a crèche for certain courses. There is separate funding for people who obtain jobs but still require guidance. GATE staff speak a range of languages, including Bengali, Somali and Arabic, and provide an informal and friendly atmosphere.

Projects for the homeless

Making Changes

Making Changes is a course, held at the North Lambeth Day Centre in South London, starting every three weeks. This is part of the Off the Streets and Into Work Initiative, funded by the ESF and a partnership of local authorities, voluntary agencies, Imperial Chemical Industries (ICI) and FOCUS Central London. This trains project workers in hostels and day centres to give basic advice on how to begin the process of getting 'into jobs and back into the mainstream of life'. Homeless people can then access vocational guidance, basic job preparation or more specialised training. A key feature of the Off The Streets and into Work project is the existence of specially designed feeder training programmes. These schemes last up to 6-8 weeks, do not affect benefit, and provide free travel, lunches and showers. Training includes computer skills, job tasters, confidence building, basic skills, etc. This gives clients a chance to learn new skills and get back into the habit of working. Finally there is an employment agency for homeless people, Streets Ahead, and a job club.

Making Changes began in March 1997. It is open to anyone aged 18-60, living in hostel accommodation or otherwise homeless, or recently resettled from hostel accommodation. It consists of a three-week course with free lunches and a travel card. Where necessary, an individual can stay in the project for six weeks. The course includes confidence-building, careers guidance (both individual and group) from a qualified guidance officer, and training in jobsearch, ICT, literacy and numeracy, creative writing, art, relaxation and stress- and anger-management. Actual contact hours (excluding lunch) amount to 16 hours a week, so trainees do not lose state benefits.

The current group had been on the course for only three days and only one interviewed had had any help before coming to Making Changes. This was Allan, aged 51, by far the most confident and articulate of the group. He had found out about the course from the project worker who visited his day centre. He had been staying in a bed and breakfast but was now in a hostel. 'I've been on a similar course before - it was higher-powered than this - it got me a job ... I'm hoping for secure employment ... access to jobs through the net would be helpful ... what we all need really is instant access to information.'

Making Changes was the first help that David, aged 41, had received. He had been referred from a day centre. 'I'm living in a flat now ... I was out of work for two years - I was on the sick for a year ... I hope to get a better job, now my CV's a lot better ... I hope I can learn more here before going to a job interview.'

Anthony, aged 22, had come over from Cork after three years on the street on discharge from prison. He had been approached by the project worker, Bill, in his hostel. 'I came to learn ... I learnt nothing in school, like ... I'm doing maths because I'm useless at maths ... I had no help getting into education before and no-one suggested it.' Asked what were the best things about the course, he said, 'Everything!'

John, aged 23, who had spent about eight months in a hostel, told me, 'I go to St Giles [day centre] sometimes ... Bill was down there one time ... They can only do so much for me here ... I want to do a number of things, caring for the environment, wildlife and so on ... I hope to get some independence.'

Although access to Making Changes is supposed to be through referral from key guidance workers in hostels, outreach has proved far more effective - though time-consuming. Project workers recruit by visiting hostels and day centres. Once people enter the project, they are encouraged to stay by the holistic approach which caters for individual needs, with some individual teaching as well as group sessions. Users are also encouraged to help each other learn. The hardest group to reach are the street homeless, and those who do access the service often prove hard to integrate. In the hierarchy of needs, their main priority is shelter. Once they have entered a hostel, *they are more ready to take the first step back to inclusion.*

Hard outcomes are very hard to evaluate in the case of the Making Changes project. Not only is it very difficult to track homeless people, but it is hard to get education providers and employers to send letters confirming that an individual is with them. Soft outcomes, on the other hand, rapidly become visible, particularly growth in confidence and the ability to articulate their feelings about their situation. This is aided by creative writing, which helps people to bring out and face up to the difficulties in their lives, and an atmosphere which engenders confidence and co-operation between trainees. Making Changes has proved quite successful at encouraging people to take the first step. Most users come in with energy and enthusiasm but require practical help.

St Botolph's drop-in centre

MTW provides services three days a week at St Botolph's, a church drop-in centre for the homeless (mainly older white men). Building confidence and breaking isolation are seen as the first steps back towards social inclusion. MTW provides 1½ hour classes on subjects such as drama therapy, creative writing, basic skills, art, do-it-yourself (DIY), music, conflict resolution and anger management. Individual counselling is available from project workers.

The St Botolph's project in particular generates such 'soft' outcomes as confidence, enjoyment, discovery of skills and abilities and social contact; but some go on to further courses and eventually some re-enter employment.

D Networking

Networking is good, and many users are advised by other agencies to approach MTW. The service is a member of the London East Advice and Guidance Network, whose meetings are generally hosted by the TEC. There are also links with local government, trade unions and the DfEE.

Through partnership with organisations such as St Botolph's and friendly links with hostels for the homeless and community organisations, MTW forms part of a holistic service to people at risk of social exclusion.

E Outcomes and assessment

Eligible users comprise homeless people and members of ethnic minorities. All must be adults and attendance is voluntary. So far MTW has had up to 5,000 users. There is no systematic follow-up for those who receive guidance, but those on training projects are followed up every three months for a year. Statistics are kept on immediate 'hard' outcomes (that is, entry into employment, training or education) but 'soft' outcomes such as increased confidence, though extremely important, are hard to measure and therefore undervalued by most funders.

GATE has been particularly successful in meeting its targets, even though over half its users are Bangladeshi, a group which suffers the highest unemployment rates in the United Kingdom. From June 1995 to March 1996, 2123 clients registered, some of whom took Personal Development Training. Of the trainees, 215 found jobs (against a target of 200, and 65 per cent found white collar jobs) and 668 went on to further training (against a target of 250). The targets were also exceeded in 1996/7, with 185 finding jobs and 202 going on to further training.

This is a user-friendly service with staff committed to the interests of some of the most marginalised people in British society. The team is flexible and holistic in that it is poised to respond to a wide variety of needs, and contains a great deal of expertise and experience, including the first-hand experience of its ethnic minority members. The small size of the organisation, although problematic in financial terms, gives the advantage of minimising bureaucracy and maximising staff contact.

There is often a cash flow problem, particularly with EU and TEC funding which tend to be paid very late. A link with a university would be helpful here, but universities seem to be uninterested in such links with voluntary organisations. Funders not only pay late but demand monthly audits, which take up valuable staff time and are not helpful in view of the relative lack of routine operations characteristic of such services. Funding difficulties mean losing valuable staff members, who seek more secure employment. The computer drop-in centre, where users could type up their curricula vitae, use learning packages such as the National Vocational Qualification level 2 (NVQ2) in IT or Interactive Careers Guidance packages or use the Internet to look for jobs, has been closed due to funding problems. Funding problems also restrict the amount of PR for MTW generally that can be carried out vis-à-vis funders and potential funders, though particular projects are well publicised.

Case study no. 28

Community Service Volunteers

Community Service Volunteers
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Opening hours: Monday to Friday 0900-1700
Contact person: Liz Thomas, Development Manager

Philosophy

'Everyone has something to offer.'

A History, context and general structure

Community Service Volunteers (CSV) was set up as a national voluntary sector organisation in 1952, aiming to take an active role in all aspects of the communities it serves. This study focuses on Glasgow CSV's Training Options, which was established in 1989 under Training for Work (now Employment Training).

Funding comes from Glasgow City Council and Glasgow Development Agency (GDA). There is no management board at local level, although there is a chief executive in London with United Kingdom responsibility and a national officer for Scotland. CSV is able to generate its own income to some extent, in that training delivered for other organisations is charged directly to them. In addition, the ES pays for some training courses.

CSV in Glasgow has 54 members of staff of whom 24 are full-time, on short-term contracts. There are also several voluntary members of staff. Staff have a wide range of skills, qualifications and experience. Those involved in training have qualifications in Training (D33, D34). All staff have been involved in accredited courses of some form, e.g. psychometric testing, equal opportunities and health and safety. It is also planned to allow members of staff to undertake careers guidance training.

B Functions, target groups and content

CSV Training Options aims to prepare adults for the labour market. It concentrates on working with those from disadvantaged groups (the homeless, the disabled, ethnic minorities) and with those lacking self-esteem. Vocational guidance and counselling, groupwork and Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) accredited courses are offered to members of the groups mentioned above. Fridays are usually set aside for trainees to spend time in the centre working toward Scottish Vocational Qualifications. Clients can also gain access to labour market information through access to Gateway's databases, newspapers for job vacancies and the Glasgow City Council job vacancy list.

The geographical area covered is Glasgow and surrounding areas (the west coast). CSV's philosophy is that everyone has something to offer. The focus is very much on personal development. It recognises that skills alone are insufficient in preparation for labour market entry. Social difficulties must also be overcome. Individuals at risk of social exclusion need the confidence to use the skills they have gained. The mission statement of Training Options is: 'To create opportunities for people to play an active part in the life of their community by providing a comprehensive, confidential and caring range of training services which effectively and efficiently meets customer requirements and satisfaction'.

CSV offers Employment Training courses, funded by the GDA in vocational areas such as business administration, IT and community work. Trainees retain their benefits with a weekly top-up allowance of £10.00, and can also receive help with travel expenses incurred, both to the training centre and to the employer with whom placement has been arranged for on-the-job training.

The disabled clients referred by PACT are adults who have some form of disability or health problem which affects them in the workplace. These courses are funded by the ES. CSV finds placement companies for trainees, while offering off-the-job training including personal development and vocational guidance at the training centre. A 'SHAPE' (Self Help and Preparation for Employment) course, funded by the ES, is run by CSV for adults with a range of disabilities. This course aims to help trainees enter into the labour market. Trainees are referred to CSV by Disability Employment Advisers, who work in ES Job Centres. This is a two-week course specifically targeting disabled adults who are demotivated.

Insight is a five-week training programme which is designed to prepare individuals for entry into the labour market, through building up confidence in a group setting. The course involves help with job search skills, letter writing and curricula vitae (CVs). Other techniques in the training centre include researching a topic and making a short presentation; and drawing up a job description and holding mock interviews. Work experience 'tasters' are built into this programme too, and trainees are given access to psychometric testing (including aptitude testing) and career interest guides. Vocational guidance and counselling are integral parts of the Insight programme, which is delivered by CSV's own training officers.

CSV runs two schemes under the Glasgow Works programme. This intermediate labour market organisation allows participants to have the status of an employed person and carry out work which is of benefit to the community. One of these specifically targets people from various ethnic minority backgrounds, and involves working to improve access to health services amongst members of black and ethnic minority communities, advocating for them, meeting any language needs and overcoming any cultural barriers.

The other Glasgow Works programme is run from City Station, a small office which CSV recently set up for one-stop advice on housing, benefits and vocational guidance and counselling. It is aimed at those who have been unemployed for at least one year and includes vocational training, personal development and paid work in the community. There is specific targeting of homeless people for this programme and for general advice and information.

C Access

Users commonly hear about the service through PACT and the ES. Those embarking on Employment Training programmes must be referred by the ES, and must meet the government's criteria (i.e. over 18 years old and unemployed for 6 months or more). Some adults find out about CSV through word of mouth, or through advertising. Visits are made to the ES to inform their staff of CSV provision. Adverts have been placed in local newspapers, although word of mouth has been found to be a successful means of informing the client group.

CSV does not charge its clients for the use of its services. Those following training courses are offered some flexibility in the timing, but usually these run from roughly 9.30 a.m. - 4.00 p.m., with time built in on a weekly basis for job search, so that trainees can visit Job Centres if they wish. CSV's location is very central in Glasgow and easily accessible by public transport. There is a small reception area, in which enquirers can pick up information leaflets on CSV and other providers of education and training.

There are no crèche facilities in the centre, although CSV does link up with Glasgow Works' ESF project in which there is a contribution towards childcare provision.

Colin was raised in an alcoholic family, and missed a lot of his schooling. He had worked in the fishing industry, but became unemployed. He had experienced two periods of homelessness, and came to CSV to improve his prospects. He is now on a work placement and working towards a Business Administration VQ. 'The course instilled confidence...showed me I wasn't as bad at these things [literacy and numeracy] as I thought...the most I ever wrote was my signature. You're treated well. You do get a lot of support here...you still get a lot of support from CSV...I seem to have learned something, more than other places I've been to. They actually take an interest. It's boosted my confidence, given me the get up and go. Hopefully I'll have the VQ at the end of it.'

Monica had been a teacher for ten years, but stopped work after suffering from depression. She wanted a career change, and was referred to CSV by Job Centre staff. She is presently working as a personal assistant in the centre. 'I've had a width of experience in different offices. Staff have been extremely supportive. There are support mechanisms, so you can say if it's getting too much and that can be addressed. I've really been looked on as another member of staff. I've been given respect by the managers but my status as a trainee is taken into account as well. The staff have been good at encouraging me to go for posts...trying to boost my morale...very much on the look out for opportunities for trainees. [CSV] has been good for clarifying what I want in a career. I know what I want and what I don't want. I've had a mixture, so I can see more clearly what I'm ideally suited to. Job seeking skills have been good for me'.

D Networking

CSV networks with several voluntary and statutory organisations. It is a member of Glasgow Adult Guidance Network, Glasgow Training Forum, Glasgow Homeless Network, Support Needs Group, STAG (a special needs training group) and Youth Link (for 16-26 year olds). There is also liaison with the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations and other organisations, many of which rely on CSV to deliver training courses; for example, there have been trainees on Employment Training courses who have been referred by the Scottish Refugee Council (see case study 31). Another example is the delivery of a basic telephone skills and computer training course for Glasgow Association for Mental Health clients.

E Outcomes and assessment

The precise number using the centre each week is difficult to state. There are over 100 adults following different training programmes. Some of these are in centre-based work preparation programmes, while others are only at the centre one day per week, the remainder of their time being spent on placement with an employer.

Continuing guidance after users have started a job is not formally provided but many users make contact informally, by telephone or in person, to offer news of their progress or to seek to improve their position in the labour market.

CSV's location in Glasgow city centre makes it accessible for its target groups. All the training programmes provided include significant elements of personal development and vocational guidance and counselling. Importantly, CSV recognises that vocational skills alone are worthless if the learner lacks the confidence to make placements, or undertake job search and mock interviews. Its main strength lies in its ability to spend sufficient amounts of time with clients. Whilst other organisations may face constraints, CSV can listen to clients and offer impartial advice and information which is client-centred. There are no quantitative targets to be met. On the other hand, one significant problem identified by CSV is the amount of time staff have to spend on administrative work. Ideally, they would like to spend more time on actually delivering services.

Links with other organisations are exploited to their full potential. CSV can always access relevant expertise. For example, housing and welfare services are often demanded by the situation clients are in. The majority of needs and problems can be dealt with in-house, but referrals are made as appropriate.

CSV Training Options makes an important contribution to assisting groups at risk of social exclusion in labour market entry and advancement. Courses tailored to the needs of adults who are disabled, adults from ethnic minority backgrounds and the homeless are in place, and good networking facilitates referrals from relevant organisations, so that members of these groups can take advantage of the provision of pre-vocational training and vocational guidance and counselling.

Case study no. 29

Ethnic Minority Enterprise Centre

Ethnic Minority Enterprise Centre (EMEC)

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Opening hours: Monday - Friday, 9.00 a.m. - 12.30 p.m. and from 1.30 p.m. - 5.00 p.m.

Contact: Mr Fiaz Khan, Employment Training Adviser

Philosophy

'It is necessary to alleviate discrimination, racism and promote fair representation of members of black, and ethnic minority communities in employment and training.'

A History, context and general structure

EMEC was set up in 1993 to serve members of black and ethnic minority communities in Glasgow and its surrounding area. At that time, Strathclyde Regional Council made a funding commitment towards the organisation of four years. The new local authority, Glasgow City Council, now funds EMEC on a year-to-year basis. In the financial year 1994-95 total funding was £245,037. From 1997 this has been cut by 25 per cent.

The Management Board is represented by a cross-section of the black and ethnic minority communities in the Glasgow area. There are employees from Glasgow City Council, the LEC (Glasgow Development Agency) and the ES. Many of the staff employed by EMEC are themselves from ethnic minority backgrounds which reflect the community as a whole. Two members of staff (there are seven full-time employees) are employed as employment counsellors who mainly provide one-to-one counselling, assisting clients to identify their needs, draw up an action plan and take up job opportunities or access suitable training opportunities.

B Functions, target groups and content

EMEC's target group is all black and ethnic minority adults in Glasgow and surrounding areas, but in particular young people lacking qualifications and women returners. It offers advice and counselling on a range of issues: housing, immigration, benefits and employment and learning opportunities, with referral to specialist agencies where necessary. Information can be provided in a range of community languages and some employees have bi-lingual and multilingual skills.

Clients may utilise both one-to-one counselling and group work sessions, to equip them with the necessary skills and confidence to improve their labour market situation. They can be given support in compiling a CV and with job seeking skills, including application forms, telephone skills and interview techniques. The advice which is offered to clients is mainly vocational and is client-centred.

EMEC provides a free job access point every Monday, Wednesday and Friday. This offers clients access to newspapers, job vacancies, use of a photocopier, fax machine and telephone. EMEC can also provide stationery and postage for CVs and letters to be sent to employers.

Those clients who wish to register with EMEC to seek employment complete a detailed questionnaire, so that needs can be clearly identified and client job-matching can be carried out when vacancies arise. Needs taken into consideration include literary, numeracy, English as a second language and personal development for job preparation. Customised six-month courses, tailored to the needs of minority communities, have been delivered by EMEC. These courses have included job-seeking skills for women returners and for ethnic minority youth, and access courses run in conjunction with further education colleges, including access to social and health care and to beauty therapy. There have also been computing courses run on a part-time basis to suit clients' needs. These are SQA-accredited programmes including desktop publishing, word processing, databases and computerised accounting.

As well as preparing clients for entry into, and improvement in, the labour market, EMEC plays a key role in encouraging employers to recruit members of the ethnic minority communities. This involves developing relationships with major employers in the local area, encouraging a wide range of employers to develop a better awareness of cultural diversity, assisting employers with implementation of equal opportunities policies. In doing all this, EMEC aims to develop awareness of new employment opportunities in expanding or relocating companies.

C Access to the service

Initial contact is mostly by telephone although "drop-in" is also a feature and significant numbers are referred to EMEC by the ES, the Careers Service and other black and ethnic minority organisations in the Glasgow area. Awareness of the service is largely through word-of-mouth, although information leaflets are distributed widely, open days are organised on a regular basis and EMEC newsletters are sent to relevant organisations.

EMEC does not set time limits on the usage of its services, and does not charge clients for any of its services. Those who attend courses are provided with subsistence, i.e. allowance for travel and lunch. Employment counsellors offer vocational guidance to clients both on-site and in the community in ES Job Centres, in areas with a large black and ethnic minority population.

EMEC's location is central and secure. It has significant spacing on the ground floor of a large building used by several organisations. Users have the opportunity to browse through various pieces of printed information at a reception area. There is also provision of confidential advice and counselling in comfortable, well maintained surroundings.

D Networking

EMEC is a member of the Glasgow Adult Guidance Network. It has well established links with the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations, Glasgow Development Agency, Strathclyde European Partnership and of course local employers. There are particularly close links with the ES.

E Outcomes and assessment of the service

Users of EMEC have their details held on a database. This allows for record-keeping and tracking of clients. Questionnaires are used to evaluate the service, and contact is maintained to keep the database up to date and determine whenever those who have found employment are seeking to better themselves. Approximately 700 people approach EMEC per year for a first interview. Given that many make more than one visit, the figure is over 1,000 for total interviews conducted. In year 1996-97 136 clients entered employment and 185 entered training of some description, which will improve their prospects of entering the labour market.

EMEC is a relatively small organisation and its funding base both inhibits longer-term activities and denies members of staff a sense of permanency. Its strengths derive from the fact that it is genuinely multicultural and multilingual. All of the major community languages are spoken and a range of minority communities is represented amongst staff and members of the management board.

Advice is available not only at EMEC's city centre location, but can also be accessed in areas of Glasgow where there is a large ethnic minority population. Good links with community groups and the ES facilitate this provision. Training courses are tailor-made for members of ethnic minority communities, aiming to break down barriers to employment and other forms of social exclusion experienced by this group.

EMEC's innovative work with employers is the key to its success. There are employers in Glasgow who now circulate all vacancies to EMEC. Some employers have been willing to offer work placements to EMEC clients and many employers have improved their equal opportunities policies in relation to recruitment and retention of staff from ethnic minority backgrounds. In common with other organisations, EMEC has suffered from cuts in funding, and would like to be able to offer more in-depth advice and counselling to clients and better marketing of the services on offer, thus dealing with more clients. Training of its staff is limited by resources, i.e. it is difficult for staff cover to be arranged if training courses are being undertaken.

Case study no. 30

Continuing Education Gateway

Continuing Education Gateway
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Opening hours: Monday - Thursday 0900 - 1800,
Friday 0900 - 1700
Contact Person: Sandra Cuthill, Co-ordinator
Information Services

Philosophy

'Adult guidance should be accessible to all adults.'

A History, context and general structure

Continuing Education Gateway was set up in 1989 by the former Strathclyde Regional Council. Several departments were involved in its inauguration: the careers service, further education colleges, community education and secondary schools. The main aim was to improve the uptake of learning opportunities in further education colleges by improving access to information, particularly in the APTs across the region in which unemployment figures were high. The introduction of a free telephone service providing information on learning opportunities in Strathclyde's colleges was seen as one way of overcoming social exclusion.

Until September 1997, the helpline was promoted only across western Scotland (although it was used by many beyond the area), but Gateway's position has recently been strengthened in that it has won the tender to offer Learning Direct, the national adult guidance helpline and database, in the whole of Scotland. Active promotion on a Scotland-wide basis is now carried out and databases are becoming more extensive as the service develops. This involves extended opening hours to include evenings and Saturday mornings. It is funded mainly by local authorities, although some income comes from the Scottish Office, careers services, colleges and the ESF. Funding has been secured to cover the three-year period 1997-2000. The Director of Education of Glasgow City Council is responsible for service delivery.

Gateway has a general manager, with overall responsibility for all its operations. An assistant manager has specific responsibility for the supervision of the helpline. At present there are three full-time advisers. Contracts are awarded according to the period of funding.

B Functions, target groups and content

In keeping with its original purpose, Gateway's helpline service aims to improve access to opportunities. It also attempts to make vocational guidance more accessible to adults. Callers to the helpline can be referred to adult guidance officers in the community where a need for face-to-face guidance has been identified. These advisers are employed by Gateway and are based in careers offices. A wider aim of Gateway is to produce and distribute accurate, up-to-date careers information as widely as possible. Schools, colleges, careers offices and community education centres across western Scotland are supplied with relevant materials on an annual basis.

Gateway's telephone advisers make use of databases to provide clients with accurate information and advice about educational opportunities. There is an extensive careers library in the telephone room area containing the full range of careers resources. Information is collated directly from suppliers of opportunities, and details such as current entrance requirements for courses and contact addresses and telephone numbers are provided.

The service plays host to national guidance events and campaigns, such as Adult Learners Week, which aims to promote lifelong learning. The freephone number is usually featured on television at the time of the campaign. The opening hours of the helplines are extended to meet extra demands at the time of such campaigns.

C Access to the service

Advisers have access to databases and a careers library to assist with enquiries. They are also aware of the location of advisers who are based in the community, so that referrals can be made. If an information request cannot be dealt with immediately for some reason the adviser can arrange to call the enquirer back, or alternatively, the enquirer can telephone at a later stage. Advisers have access to the full range of information relating to jobs, education and training, including funding for study. A database known as Inspire is used for this purpose.

Covering such a wide area means that geographical isolation, for example, in rural areas, is no bar to access. There are in addition specific arrangements for the disabled and for ethnic minorities. Gateway has, in conjunction with the social work department, established a disability helpline, catering for those with physical disabilities and for people with all forms of learning difficulties. A member of staff from LEAD (see case study 21) spends two days each week at Gateway specifically to provide advice and information to disabled adults. This helpline has allowed disabled people to make informed choices about education and training opportunities suited to their needs. It has also been useful in the referral of clients to organisations which offer vocational guidance and counselling specifically to those with special needs.

Clients from particular black and ethnic minority backgrounds can access advice in their native language. There are Gateway helpline numbers in the four major community languages, Urdu, Punjabi, Hindi and Chinese. Recorded messages are relayed to the caller who can expect a return telephone call to be made dealing with their guidance request in the particular language requested. Enquirers may be referred to adult guidance officers in the Careers Service or other organisations which deal specifically with members of black and ethnic minority communities.

Gateway occasionally advertises in newspapers. It has sponsored Glasgow City Council calendars and spreads its publicity leaflets as widely as possible.

D Networking

Gateway plays a central role in all Scottish adult guidance initiatives. Networking is a crucial part of its activities. It has to liaise very closely with the providers of employment, education and training in order to ensure that its information is totally accurate. During 1997 and 1998 Gateway worked in partnership with the Scottish Community Education Council to produce a comprehensive database of all educational courses offered in the community across Scotland.

E Outcomes and assessment of the service

The service receives around 13,000 calls per annum. Confidentiality is maintained, although callers are asked to give their personal details for statistical purposes and for service evaluation. Calls are received from the unemployed, people returning to the labour market, those seeking to improve their position in the labour market, people facing redundancy and those returning to education. Evaluation of the service offered to callers is carried out through three-monthly questionnaires. These are sent to a random 10 per cent sample as part of quality assessment and collation of destination statistics.

Its important role has been recognised fully at government level in the award of the contract to operate the national helpline (Scotland) and fully comprehensive national database of opportunities. Its strengths are that it is easily accessible - only a telephone is required and it can be accessed at no cost to the user - and that it is comprehensive, while acknowledging that often users require more in depth face-to-face vocational guidance. The helpline does not aim to be holistic, but serves as an accessible provider of initial information and a referral point where necessary.

Continuing Education Gateway's activities in the guidance field are diverse and contribute a considerable amount to making vocational guidance more accessible to those at risk of social exclusion. Its collaborative work with LEAD Scotland allows disabled people to gain access to advice and information on suitable opportunities. The special telephone lines in community languages enable members of ethnic minority communities for whom English is a second language to access advice and information in their mother tongue. The provision of the freephone helpline is complemented well by Gateway's presence in the community in the form of careers office based advisers.

Case study no. 31

Scottish Refugee Council

Scottish Refugee Council (West of Scotland)
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Contact person: Nicholas Putnam, Employment, Education & Training Worker

Philosophy

> 'People who have suffered persecution and abuse of human rights deserve a smooth path to resettlement.'

A History, context and general structure

The Scottish Refugee Council (SRC) is a registered charity and a Company Limited by Guarantee, founded in 1985 by a group of concerned individuals with support from Refugee Action and the Refugee Council. It has two offices, in Glasgow and Edinburgh, is headed by a Chief Executive and has a Board of Directors.

Separate refugee statistics for Scotland are not collected, but in the four years to 1997, the SRC as a whole has worked with over 1,000 asylum-seekers and refugees. Currently there are estimated to be about 500 refugees, including children, in Glasgow. Most refugees in Scotland come from the Middle East, Africa and Eastern Europe, but recent additions have included people from China, India, Romania and former Yugoslavia. Over 80 per cent of refugees are unemployed, many for at least a year, despite that fact that around 60 per cent have higher education qualifications and many were professionals such as doctors, veterinarians, engineers and teachers.

Refugees come to Scotland for a variety of reasons: some were trapped there while studying, on business or visiting, when circumstances at home made their return dangerous; some chose Scotland because they had friends or families there; some entered the United Kingdom through a Scottish sea port; some leave London for fear of fellow nationals there; some were detained there on their way to North America by United Kingdom Immigration Officials (Scottish National Conference on Refugees 1992).

Funding comes from a wide variety of sources, including local and central government (about 70 per cent), the ESF, Scottish Homes, churches, the National Lottery, other trusts and charities and private individuals. Funding fluctuates from year to year. In 1996-7 it was £865,000, but local government reorganisation led to a loss of around £30,000 and Glasgow City Council has now stopped funding the Glasgow Education Project. In 1996, in the light of the removal of asylum seekers' entitlement to benefit, the SRC established the Refugee Survival Trust (now an independent charity) to give financial support to the destitute.

There are ten staff in Glasgow, generally with relevant professional qualifications, of whom four are full-time, three are part-time and three are volunteers with specialist knowledge, from the Citizens' Advice Bureau and the Glasgow City Council Ethnic Minority Advice Service. In addition volunteers assist with administration, teaching, befriending and campaigning. In-service training is provided for the paid staff by the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations and staff are sent on external courses from time to time. There is not, however, much appropriate training in the field available. The enhancement of skills and knowledge depends mostly on regular team meetings and exchanges with the East of Scotland branch in Edinburgh.

B Functions, target groups and content

Refugees have been forced to leave their country because of persecution and human rights abuses, and so require extensive and immediate practical support and counselling for particular difficulties and problems in which no other agency specialises; hence the SRC, like the Refugee Council in England, aims to ensure for them a smooth path to resettlement. The Council also assists those seeking asylum but not yet given refugee status. Many, including some with children, have no entitlement to state benefits.

The SRC gives legal advice and representation; help with applications for asylum; and advice on housing, health, welfare benefits, and education, training and employment. It conducts training and seminars on refugee needs and issues; gives advice and assistance with policy development concerning refugee needs and service provision; co-ordinates multi-agency Refugee Forums; and helps to develop Scottish-wide initiatives through the Confederation of Scottish Local Authorities (CoSLA). Vocational guidance and counselling is thus one of a range of services.

Individual guidance and counselling is the norm, since the ability to provide group counselling depends on extra funding. An important element of the process is to give realistic information, since refugees often arrive with expectations which are not met. The Council has expertise in a wide range of associated issues so a holistic service is offered, including arranging outings, an art project and so on (medical and psychological problems are referred to other services). Advocacy is also important, in particular vis-à-vis the Scottish Office, the Student Awards Agency for Scotland, Colleges of Further Education, university admissions officers, the Glasgow Development Agency and, occasionally, employers.

Computers are used not only for keeping records and monitoring service delivery, but also carry a series of databases such as Microdoors and PlanIT, which are updated every six months by Continuing Education Gateway (see Case Study 30).

Users may be put in contact with employers or the Careers Service. Education/training, which normally includes a guidance element, is delivered by a range of providers, of which the most important are the Wise Group, Community Service Volunteers and various Colleges of Further Education. ESOL and IT generally form the content. Grants are available for the cost of training. Counselling and advice continue to be available from the SRC.

C Access

Users are a mixture of voluntary and referred. They find out about the service principally through word of mouth, for example, through relatives who arrived earlier and refugee communities. In other cases they find out about it from Citizens' Advice Bureaux, the Ethnic Minority Advice Service, the Immigration Nationality Department (IND), the Social Work Department, prisons and detention centres, refugee agencies in England and occasionally from the ES. The Council is also a campaigning organisation, highlighting specific issues by handing out leaflets and taking collections in the street and in August at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe.

Many users make the first contact by phone, but ‘dropping in’ is also common. There are no childcare facilities, and the majority of the leaflets in the reception area are in English, but the city centre location is very convenient, the premises are pleasant and above all the staff are friendly and welcoming. In addition, staff go on request to detention centres, prisons and hospitals, to benefit agencies, Social Work offices and Job Centres, to education/training providers, and to housing associations. They offer home visits only where necessary.

The service is not only free but helps to obtain financial help for users, for example, from the DSS Social Fund for those not eligible for the welfare benefits, grants from Community Care and the World University Service (which deals with both overseas students and refugees), and miscellaneous grants for education/training. The last government’s removal of bursaries and grants for asylum seekers caused severe difficulties so the SRC has negotiated fee waivers or obtained charitable funding. There is no time limit on the use of the service, and users tend to be seen on a regular basis. Continuing guidance is, in principle, available after a user has started a job, particularly for those in menial jobs.

The SRC also provides services to refugees through projects and support groups such as the Befriending Project (in which trained volunteers offer one-to-one practical and emotional support to refugees who would otherwise be isolated), the Art Therapy Project, the Bosnia Project, the Bosnian Women’s English Learning Project, the Medical Evacuee Project (for Bosnian refugees needing extensive medical treatment), the Bosnian Romany Literacy Project, the New Dawn support group and the Refugee Access Project. This last provides 6 months training, including English language, computer skills and careers guidance, as well as cross-cultural studies, work placements and college tasters.

> Fazad is an Iranian refugee who has been in Scotland for over two years. “Refugee Council was important for me when I first came. It helped people to go to Hamish Allan. We knew nothing about education ... We didn’t know what a bill was. Refugee Council tell us this a bill for this...for that. Very important for education as well. Many people can’t speak... English was nothing. They send people to the college.... Mr Tony Foster from the College, he start Anniesland and Langside College. I can speak English better ... When we have problem, we come here and speak to Mister Nick. We have two children. My wife can’t go to the college because...unfortunately college can’t have babies under three. But somebody come in my house and learn my wife English ... My son is going to nursery. This year is going to school. I must take some help from Mister Nick about my son, where is good, where is possible ... I had problem with the government in Iran. My wife is very homesick. We haven’t received any news from Home Office. I need English anywhere I work. Where I go to any office or any place, I need to speak. I go to flexible learning centre for future. Learn for job. I can’t go full-time ... I bring form for housing association. Refugee people help me to fill this form. Any time we have any problem, this is our office ... I would like work in office. I trying to learn computer or any other things. I was hotel manager” [in Iran].

This account shows that a holistic approach which can help with life circumstances is essential for refugees, who have little knowledge of life in their country of refuge.

D Networking

The Council is a member of the West of Scotland Refugee Forum, the Community Relations Council, the Poverty Alliance and various refugee and other voluntary organisation networks. It has co-operative links with a wide range of other organisations. These include the Refugee Council in London, the Continuing Education Gateway and other vocational guidance providers; CoSLA; the Scottish Office; local government authorities (which are also employers) and Local Enterprise Companies (LECs); the Department for Education and Employment (DfEE); the National Union of Students (NUS), which disseminates information, for example, concerning fee changes; the United Nations High Commission on Refugees (UNHCR); and ECRE , the European network for organisations working with refugees. There are regular contacts with refugee communities and with official organisations dealing with refugees on first entry.

E Outcomes and assessment

Currently 800 people (excluding children) are registered with SRC and around 45 attend the Glasgow Office each week. The Refugee Access Project provides 6 months training at 21 hours a week, and the majority of participants have gone on to higher education (64 per cent in 1996-7) or further training, as steps towards employment. Although information is gathered on the concrete outcome of the guidance process at the exit point, there is no further follow-up, due to the lack of resources and the priority given to new arrivals.

The SRC has a range of expertise and specialist knowledge not found in other agencies and a sympathetic, welcoming ethos. It responds quickly to the needs of users and thanks to its contacts with officialdom it has an ongoing outreach service giving users access when at their most vulnerable.

The break-up of the regions had adverse effects, and the funding for the Employment Adviser ended so the work has been added to that of the Education and Training Worker. More stable funding would be an advantage and additional funding for a welfare rights worker would enhance the service offered. It would also help the Council's current work to conduct follow-up surveys of past users. Most useful to refugees and asylum-seekers would be government legislation increasing entitlements to education, housing and so on, and a more enlightened approach.

Case study no. 32

Gorbals Initiative

Gorbals Initiative
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Contact person: Candy Munro

Philosophy

> 'The regeneration of the Gorbals will be achieved and sustained through the progression of local people. It is they who acquire skills, create and fill jobs and generate employment. We see ourselves as an enabling organisation.'

A History, context and general structure

Gorbals Initiative, a Local Development Company (LDC), was founded in 1991 in one of the most disadvantaged areas of Glasgow. The Management Board includes the main funders and representatives from the local business community. There are also seats for two local councillors and two community directors. The core funding is provided annually by Glasgow Development Agency (GDA) and Glasgow City Council (GCC), with project funding from GDA, GCC, Scottish Homes, the ESF, the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), Glasgow Works and others. In 1996/7 the total funding was £1,396,778, but in real terms funding has been decreasing overall and shifting towards project funding. 1997/8 only 11 per cent will be core funding, though this is skewed by a large Glasgow Works programme contributing to project funding.

Gorbals Initiative has 32 permanent staff (of whom only one is part-time). Vocational Counsellors are expected to have a degree plus a postgraduate qualification in Careers or associated areas. As an Investors in People company, it has a staff development programme linked to the business plan. It is also able to offer certification through its recognition by the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA, formerly SCOTVEC) and SQMS.

B Functions, target groups and content

The service functions to regenerate the Gorbals through increasing economic activity in the area so as to improve job opportunities, improving access to quality employment for local people and increasing the level of income of Gorbals residents through employment. The main target groups are those suffering from or at risk of entering long-term unemployment, irrespective of age. Users are voluntary but must be from the Gorbals.

The World of Work Programme is designed to help local unemployed people overcome the barriers, real or perceived, that prevent them from (re)entering the labour market. The most common barriers found are lack of confidence, of motivation, of positive work experiences and of relevant up-to-date skills. World of Work offers individual careers guidance, work experience, basic skills and vocational training. The service is client-centred and customised to the individual. For example, clients can gain certification for their existing skills or upgrade their skills through top-up training. There is heavy reliance on employer participation, including allowing groups to visit, conducting mock interviews and providing work placements.

Gorbals Initiative has developed Action Based Counselling (ABC) to offer advice, guidance and support, to help individuals to identify the most appropriate routes for them to enter employment, education or training, and to help prepare them to apply for jobs. The aim is to re-establish confidence and self-esteem. ABC has been produced by the Scottish Further Education Unit (SFEU) as a Flexipack, and a user manual is being developed.

Personal and social development courses are delivered by Gorbals Initiative, and specialist training is provided by the Glasgow College of Nautical Studies and other training providers. The courses are free and users' expenses are paid. Ongoing guidance after a user has started a job is increasingly a priority area.

Gorbals Initiative also provides help with business start-ups. Loans and grants are available and users can be helped to access further funders, such as Glasgow Development Agency Business Start-Up Support (BSUSS), Women's Action for Start-up Enterprise (WASE), Princes Youth Business Trust, Music in Scotland Trust, Glasgow Regeneration Fund and Glasgow City Council Loans and Grants. Job creation is a necessary activity to accompany vocational guidance and counselling. In 1996/7 the service helped 42 people to start businesses, which employed a further 50 people. In addition 50 companies were helped to expand, resulting in the creation of 83 full-time and 20 part-time jobs. Out of these, 20 jobs were filled from the caseload.

This is one of the services delivering the New Deal in Glasgow.

C Access

Word of mouth is the commonest way for users to find out about the service, but this rests on extensive efforts to generate access to the service. Outreach initiatives in community centres were not found to be very effective, but members of staff visit local organisations and make presentations and briefings to community and voluntary organisations. Gorbals Initiative holds open days; maintains links with other organisations, such as hostels for the homeless, the Addiction Service, the Nautical College and the ES; and advertises in the local press. On one occasion the Glasgow newspaper, the *Evening Times*, for a moderate fee (around £500) was circulated free in August 1997 to every household in the Gorbals with a special front page devoted to Gorbals Initiative and advertising its September Open Day (and the fact that a local supermarket seeking 400 new employees would be represented there). The presence in the reception area of noticeboards displaying a large number of job vacancies attracts jobseekers, who are then approached by staff and encouraged to join appropriate programmes. Many local people do not have telephones and users usually drop in. There is always a Duty Counsellor available.

Five young unemployed people who had been on a programme for four or five weeks so far explained the value of Gorbals Initiative to them. One was homeless and another had been until recently.

None felt they had had any help with accessing employment or education before, even though they had been registered with the ES. Kathy, aged 18, had used a Careers Office but 'it's not very good, it doesn't help you at all ... they don't tell you what to do in the interview'. The youngest, Stephen, aged 16, had never seen his school Careers Service, whereas the oldest, Graham, aged 20, had found he was too old to go to the Careers Office. He had some help from the ES Job Club, but 'everything I wanted to do you had to be 21 or have experience', so he had not found employment. Graham had found out about Gorbals Initiative from staff at the hostel he lived in, the other four through friends or family. Two had come simply to look at the job noticeboards and been approached by counsellors and encouraged to join a programme: 'My dad told me about the job noticeboards ... I came here to look for a job and a woman on the corridor told me about this programme' (Stephen); 'A friend told me ... I was looking at job vacancies and Kerr [one of the counsellors] started talking to me and gave me forms to fill .. I didn't realise I was going to end up on a course' (Kevin, aged 18).

All were enthusiastic about the service: 'They're helpful - they try to get you the job you want ... sit and talk to you about the job you want and try to get you into it' (Graham); 'Cos they're training you, not just sending you for interviews ... they give you ideas about jobs ... they can help you go to college' (Kathy); 'They try their hardest to get you a job - they guarantee you a job at the end. They help you in a lot of ways. They help you with your confidence ... you get the right training as well for the job' (Anthony, aged 18); 'I can get a job at the end of it. With my qualifications I didn't think I could get one and now I've been told I can' (Stephen).

Kevin, who had been injured at work, had learnt the hard way that quality of employment was important: 'If I wasn't in here I'd still be unemployed and doing nothing ... it's just all about qualifications - that's the only thing I don't have. I left school before I took my exams ... that's what employers ask you ... when you say "none" they're just not interested in you ... Even the jobs I've had have just been slave labour ... my last job I was in, I was doing six people's work ... for £70 a week, working from 9 a.m. to 7.30 p.m. ... I want a trade behind me [now an apprentice joiner]. It's given me a lot of hope about getting a job I want.'

Asked what Gorbals Initiative had helped them to achieve so far, most felt better about themselves and confident about the future: 'I've joined this Job Club and I've had a wee bit of casual work from time to time .. the Job Club's brilliant, the best help of the lot ... you're involved with other people the same age and that. They explain how to get the job you're wanting ... I enjoy coming to it, it's excellent .. they treat you different [from the ES] ... they treat you all the same' (Graham); 'It's the job training thing ... just getting us used to employment barriers ... confidence, if you don't know what to say in an interview ... teaching you not to be shy ... work placements ... helping with CVs (*curricula vitae*) ... we'll definitely get a job or go to college in two years' (Kathy); 'Understanding about how to go about getting a job ... it seems a lot easier now' (Kevin); 'I feel confident and I feel I'll get a job at the end of it ... you've got to feel confident' (Anthony); 'Well, it's helped me find out what kind of job I want and how to go about looking for it ... It's made me feel better about it, that I've got a chance to get a job .... I'm going to college' (Stephen).

In all, they felt more confident, more motivated and more focused than before on what they wanted to do and how to go about achieving it.

The service attracts people partly through its new and pleasant premises and informative reception area. Urban Aid funding is available for childcare for people on courses or work placements. The service is free and without limit of time as regards vocational guidance, though courses are naturally of fixed duration. Other services include a Job Club; recruitment services; a Business Shop to help people researching a business idea and small local companies wishing to expand; and an IT Resource Room. A sports centre is being built on an adjoining site and this may generate more enquiries. Gorbals Initiative is a Training and Employment Grant (TEG) agent, and can arrange grants for full-time employment for eligible users whereby the company may claim back up to 60 per cent of wages for up to 26 weeks and 100 per cent of agreed training costs. Advice on other grants is also available. The Adelphi Centre also contains a Flexible Learning Unit of the Glasgow College of Nautical Studies, which is open to Gorbals Initiative users, a crèche, a café, several companies and meeting and conference facilities.

D Networking

Gorbals Initiative is a member of the Glasgow Adult Guidance Network, the Glasgow Learning Alliance, the Local Development Companies Human Resource Development Alliance and the Education Business Partnership. It has co-operative links with colleges, the Careers Service, the ES, LECs, local government and local employers.

E Outcomes and assessment

There are about 400 new registrations each year. Monthly statistics are produced on numbers entering employment or education. The August/September 1997 report shows an active caseload of 359, of whom 45 found employment that month. Over three-quarters of these jobs were permanent and 82 per cent were full-time. A third of the caseload were already in employment, but over half had been unemployed for at least six months and over half of these for more than two years. A third of those who found employment had already been in jobs, but a further 43 per cent had been unemployed for six months or more. Those aged 26 and above made up 65 per cent of the case load, with an additional 28 per cent aged between 18 and 25; but the majority (63 per cent) of those who found jobs were under 26 years old. Men constituted 59 per cent of the caseload but obtained 73 per cent of the jobs.

In an area where many people have few or no qualifications, education is an important element in labour market progression. In 1996/7, 63 users accessed mainstream FE courses, 17 went into higher education, nine joined the University of Glasgow pre-Access programme and five joined the Strathclyde University pre-entry course. Follow-up for a year after guidance and counselling is carried out through True GRIT, the Market Research project of Glasgow Works. Gorbals Initiative is client-centred, with a service tailored to meet individual needs rather than moulding individuals to fit what is on offer. Action-Based Counselling provides a robust process and a sound framework within which to deliver the service. It is holistic in that it aims to tackle the issues of social and economic exclusion, though those with psycho-social problems are usually referred to specialist agencies. It maintains a high profile in the area and attracts users in a variety of ways, not least by the proactive work of the staff. It is felt that access could be further enhanced, for example, through evening opening. More flexible funding would be an advantage, for example, to offer people top-up training or Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL).

Case study no. 33

Careers Bradford Ltd

Careers Bradford Ltd
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Opening hours: Mon, Tue, Thu 0900 - 1630, Wed 1000 - 1630, Fri 0900 - 1600
Contact person: Marion Cornish, Community Guidance Manager and Head of Adult Guidance

Philosophy

'People must be reached where they are, in language that they understand.'

A History, context and general structure

Careers Bradford Ltd was founded in 1995 as a private company limited by guarantee following the compulsory privatisation of the Local Authority Careers Services. It has 103 members of staff, all full time or jobshare. Fifteen are from ethnic minority groups, including a manager, a co-ordinator, seven Careers Advisers and three Employment Advisers. Most of the managers and all the Careers Advisers have the Diploma in Careers Guidance, while some of the Employment Advisers have at least NVQ 3 in Guidance.

The service caters for the people of Bradford, an ex-industrial city of about 350,000 inhabitants, and surrounding areas, most of which share Bradford's problems of unemployment and deprivation. Because of the economic and social situation in Bradford, the city attracts a large amount of funding. Part of Bradford falls under Objective 2 for the purposes of ESF funding and it receives City Challenge funding as well as many other types.

Ethnic minorities constitute a major group at risk of social exclusion. On the one hand the large Irish, Polish and Ukrainian populations are well established, not subject to discrimination on the grounds of colour and not perceived as 'immigrants'. On the other hand, those from the 'New Commonwealth' often experience serious disadvantage. Only 1-2 per cent of the population is Afro-Caribbean, and tends to be marginalised because they are so few; but as much as 16-17 per cent are of 'Asian' (that is, Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Indian) origin, and in some age bands this rises to almost 30 per cent. Bangladeshis are particularly disadvantaged (a common pattern in the United Kingdom). The lack of confidence in future employment is having serious effects on young male Asians in particular, and there is rising crime, violence and drug abuse. There is also the problem of isolation from mainstream society for Asian women: even when employed, they tend to work in Asian sewing factories and therefore frequently have little opportunity to acquire the English language, even after 20 or 30 years in Bradford. On the other hand, there are now many second and third generation Asians and although they still face discrimination, the employees of many locally-owned (whether white or Asian) firms reflect the local ethnic balance, unlike nation-wide organisations such as banks. There is also much self-employment, and the great majority of small grocery shops and taxi firms are Asian, as well as many of the restaurants.

In addition, there are many mainly white peripheral housing estates where most of the families live on social security benefits. In some cases there are three generations of a family where no one has ever been employed. There are also many young lone parents. Future problems of social exclusion arise through the very high truancy rate (as much as 25 per cent in some schools), irrespective of ethnicity.

B Functions, target groups and content

In common with all the careers companies, Careers Bradford is legally obliged to provide services for young people, but has to find additional funding for adult vocational guidance, counselling and training.

Many clients are simply demotivated, but young adults in particular, in the light of family experience, often assert that they have no wish to enter the system which excludes them - a defence mechanism against disappointed hopes and further exclusion. So vocational guidance has to start with confidence-building, either in workshops or one-to-one, before moving on to the whole guidance process of identifying skills and realistic prospects. A holistic approach is taken, recognising that life circumstances (such as the need for good quality and affordable childcare, finances, access to welfare benefits) materially affect employment choices. Some clients need help with literacy, numeracy and ESOL. The service can provide help in most Asian languages. Mentoring is also used.

For the more routine activities of information and self-assessment of abilities and interests, the computer-assisted guidance package Adult Directions is used. A novice can learn to use this within an hour, which itself is motivating.

C Access

Many people in need interact with the system only when claiming benefit, generally an alienating experience - so referrals from the ES to Careers Bradford are not usually helpful to the process of building a trusting and voluntary relationship. The long-term socially excluded lack self-confidence and motivation, and even coming into the city centre can be daunting.

There is therefore an initiative which involves starting the vocational guidance process in the community, and not only through outreach. Consultation with local communities constitutes one strand, and guidance literature is designed to present an image of Careers Bradford's activities which is appropriate to the target audience (for example, young people helped to design leaflets in the style of publicity for 'raves', or all-night dances). Another strand involves enlisting the co-operation of community workers, community activists and social workers, including Bradford College's outreach workers based in community centres under the Capacity Building project (community development with an economic slant). Many people working in the community find themselves giving advice for which they are untrained. Careers Bradford is therefore carrying out training in the basics of careers guidance. So far they have been running short, non-accredited courses, though they are considering using the Open College which offers courses equivalent to NVQ level 2 but without a time-consuming portfolio. There are information points where they can collect leaflets, and outreach careers advisers act as mentors and/or points of referral and set up workshops, jobsearch seminars etc. in community venues. Two important benefits arise from this basic training: firstly, community workers are equipped to give better advice; and, secondly, they come to realise the professional expertise that underlies guidance and are more amenable to referring individuals to guidance services.

Home visits are offered where appropriate and childcare facilities can be arranged and are often free to the user. Where training is arranged, users can receive grants for travel and living expenses.

D Networking

Careers Bradford belongs to the network of local Careers Services and the Adult Guidance Network. It has links with local employers, trade unions, local government, TECs, the Employment Service and various European funding agencies.

E Outcomes and assessment

Careers Bradford Ltd won the bid to form the National Resource Centre (called Careers Europe) because of its reputation for innovation, its involvement in a large number of pilot projects and its links with other European Union member states. It appears to be maintaining this tradition. Furthermore, attention to apparently small but important detail is one of its features. For example, the staff discovered that male clients dislike carrying conspicuous folders and discarded them before leaving the building - so now they are given material that can be hidden in their pockets. The design of leaflets mentioned above is another example. They also take an empathic approach, drawing from the clients their wants, needs and aspirations rather than making assumptions as to what these should be.

It is a professional service providing impartial and independent information, advice, guidance and assessment. Information is given on access to all local opportunities in education, training and employment, and some national, European and international. It has constantly to evolve and develop to meet newly perceived needs, often at short notice.

Between 3,000 and 4,000 adults use the service each year - the number depends on how many contracts are obtained to fund adult guidance. Similarly follow-up, which lasts up to two years, depends on the funding formula.

The problems arise largely from the necessity to seek funds for particular projects. Excluded adults need support and encouragement throughout all the stages of vocational guidance and counselling, but funding mechanisms rarely allow enough time for this. The contract stipulates that a guidance appointment lasts for one hour at a time and in principle people can make several visits - but this can stretch resources. Funding appears always to be insecure: for example, there was a good take-up, especially by women, of courses for mature students, many of whom went into university and professional careers, until the finance for these courses was reduced. Indeed, the large amount of funding received by Bradford as a whole is not utilised to the best advantage of all. For example, whereas one adult may be eligible for many benefits, another, equally disadvantaged but living in a different local area, may be eligible for none. Furthermore, many different grants of money go into different adult guidance initiatives. There is a case for city-wide co-ordination, to prevent duplication and to reduce the time spent bidding for funds.

Case Study No. 34

The Wise Group

The Wise Group
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Opening hours: Monday to Friday 0900 - 1700
Contact person: Ian Gilmour, Personnel Controller

Philosophy

'A combination of work experience and skills training allied to vocational guidance and counselling can not only help people back to work but can also produce goods and services which are of value to local communities.'

A History, context and general structure

The Wise Group is the biggest intermediate labour market organisation in Europe. It was founded in 1982 by Heatwise Glasgow Ltd. There are four branches, in the West of Scotland and part of East London, managed by a Chief Executive, and the Management Board includes business executives, local councillors, the heads of non-statutory bodies and members of the voluntary sector.

It is funded on an annual basis in approximately equal proportions by LECs/TECs, the ESF, the European Regional Development Fund and local authorities. The total funding in 1996 was £14 million, and funding has been staying the same in real terms.

There are 180 full-time permanent staff, selected for their business experience and ability to work well with the target groups, who often suffer lack of confidence.

B Functions, target groups and content

The Wise Group's function is to assist people who have been unemployed for over six months to enter employment. In fact, about four-fifths of the Glasgow trainees and two-thirds of those in East London had been unemployed for over a year. There is particular focus on the disabled, ethnic minorities, the homeless and the long-term unemployed. The programme is a mixture of work experience, skills training for twenty different kinds of work and vocational guidance and counselling. The aim is to improve employability, including the social and teamwork skills needed in the workplace. Trainees receive a rate for the job for 44 out of the 52 weeks they are on the programme. Permanent staff provide one-to-one mentoring to trainees throughout their year

In addition to the standard guidance functions, the Wise Group uses the Education Gateway computer package *Career Builder*, and accesses the Internet for information on companies and current vacancies. Continuing guidance is available after a user has started a job.

C Access

The Wise Group is advertised in Job Centres, through outreach initiatives and advertising, and through contact with services such as the Scottish Refugee Council (see Case Study 31), but many users hear about it by word of mouth. The service is free (but travel expenses are paid only for the initial 10-week training course) and voluntary.

The Employment Adviser observed that many trainees suffered from lack of self-confidence, poor self-esteem and low aspirations, and some had poor social skills - but many men thought confidence-building was 'not relevant', unlike most women. A group of trainees, as they are known, was interviewed individually during a Job Shop session. All the group had been with the Wise Group for five or six months.

Sean, aged 27, previously unemployed 6 months: 'The only help I got from anybody would have been my own help, apart from the bureau[26] sending letters ... but that's not really help, just being told ... and that's only in order to get you off the bureau ... I found out about this place through a friend who was working here ... I like practical work, that's what I'm good at ... it's helped my confidence ... I wasn't born with confidence, you know what I mean ... also it made me, not that I wasn't aware, it made me open my eyes to communication with people ... help with vocational qualifications - that opened my mind up as well - I've been promoted in this job, as of last week ... it's giving people opportunity in society ... such as building up the person's confidence ... opening their mind up to show they do have qualities ... they want to listen to you and they expect feedback.'

James, aged 36, househusband 1983 to 1996, then unemployed 18 months: 'JIG[27]... all they done was get you the interview. [Did they help you prepare for it?] No. I found out about this just by accident but I didn't actually know what it was ... it was just a poster I saw in one of the Social Work departments ... you picked up an application at the same time. It wasn't the job I was looking for ... (but) now I'm progressing slowly but surely - I've been promoted to chargehand ... [It's given me] extra skills ... another avenue that I can actually go ... I wouldn't say I came with a great deal of confidence. [And do you have more confidence now?] Aye ... I've walked away with another City and Guilds ... at times you feel as if you're - you know it's only a training programme so you always think along the lines, it's a Mickey Mouse company ... but it does fill in a gap.'

Robert aged 40, previously unemployed 4 years: I was in the Job Club[28] for six weeks, and then that's how I got the position here ... [but] I found out about it myself ... I knew someone who used to work here, ten years ago ... the ES gave us free use of the phone, free stamps ... This gives us a bridge to work - I've a better chance of getting a job - because I was unemployed four years employers didn't want to know, and my age as well ... this job has three or four different skills all rolled into one, and you've got to have good communication skills ... sales isn't something I'd ever done before, but I find it quite interesting. The money! Not that there's very much, and it costs me £50 a month to get here[29], but it's slightly better than the dole ... I'm quite happy with the money I've got.'

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[26] Word commonly used in Scotland and Northern Ireland for the Employment Service - pronounced 'buroo'.

[27] Job Interview Guaranteed, an Employment Service practice, in which they send people for interviews for jobs relevant to their skills.

[28] Employment Service

[29] After the initial 10-week training period there is no help with fares.

Gerry, aged 28, previously unemployed just over a year, had received no help before. The Wise Group 'was advertised in the Daily Record and I just phoned up ... It's taught me to do things that I didna think I could do ... you can come in and have a look at the papers, so the Job Shop is useful ... it's a good thing knowing that you're helping the public, like ... and now I'm making money in my spare time ...I feel now I can achieve a lot more than I thought I could have ... before I came in here I could never have done anything like that ... [Has it given you more confidence?] Definitely... I'm looking for a job placement ... if I can get my feet in the door I'll just take it from there.'

Neil aged 20, previously unemployed 18 months: 'The Careers Office ... wasn't any good. I just got jobs going round the industrial estates. The Job Centre was all right - I just went in and checked on the cards ... (but) they never told me what to look for ... I found out about this through a friend who used to work here ... It's experience and it gets me back just to working ... I was told it was interesting and I like it here ... there's no' anybody on your case ... the skills, a wee bit about computers ... they've taught us things I never thought I could do ...'

William, aged 18, unemployed since leaving school, had had no help before: 'When I was signing on I was just signing and walking back out the door ... and going to my bed or something! ... My brother used to be in here and he just told me it was good in here ... It's quite all right - it's quite helpful - like the Job Shop, it helps with looking for other jobs ... it's giving me experience as well ... I've a better chance of a job when I get out of here, because I haven't had much training and they're learning me new things ... I feel a lot better now I'm working instead of just sitting about on the bureau.'

D Networking
The Wise Group has links with local employers, trade unions, local government, LECs, the Employment Department and various European agencies. It is a member of the Glasgow Adult Guidance Network.

E Outcomes and assessment
The Wise Group has 900 trainees per annum and they are followed up for three months after leaving the organisation. In all, 61 per cent enter employment and 2 per cent further education within these three months; furthermore an independent evaluation MacGregor (1996) found 46 per cent in employment within six months after leaving the programme and a total of 67 per cent found a job at some time after leaving. 84 per cent of those who gained employment went into jobs that paid more than the wage on the Wise Group programme. Compared with a Glasgow average of 24 per cent, 44 per cent of those out of work for two years or more got jobs.

The strength of the service is the combination it offers of real paid work along with skills training and vocational guidance and counselling, using a holistic approach that takes into account the particular difficulties of those who have suffered unemployment and adverse life circumstances. Trainees' motivation is also enhanced by being able to see their efforts helping to regenerate their own areas and communities.

Areas felt to need improvement are in the amount of one-to-one guidance and counselling, a better methodology, better analytical techniques, better qualified counsellors and better networking. Clearly this self-critical approach is in itself a strength, and membership of the Adult Guidance Network should be helpful.

Case study no. 35

Northwest Economic Network Skillshops

Northwest Economic Network Skillshops
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Opening Hours Monday to Thursday 0900 - 1645, Friday 0900 - 1530
Contact Person: Alun Williams, Community Development Officer

Philosophy

'People are competent to play a part in the regeneration of their own area.'

A History, context and general structure

Northwest Economic Network was formed in 1994 as a local economic development agency. It is the umbrella organisation for socio-economic regeneration in Glasgow's Northwest area, in effect, from Glasgow city centre to Maryhill and Summerston. In December 1994 Skillshops were set up by Northwest Economic Network. Currently there are two centres: one in Kent Road, Anderston and one in the Maryhill area. The umbrella organisation's membership elects a local management committee on an annual basis at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). The overall manager is Brian Keenan, Director.

Funding comes from the Scottish Office's Urban Programme budget, but also from a range of other sources, including the ESF, the National Lottery Charities Board, the local authority and the GDA.

The Skillshops centre in Anderston has a total of eight members of staff. Seven of these are full-time paid, and there is one volunteer. There is a director, three human resource advisers, two administrators and one community development officer. The human resource advisers all have extensive experience in guidance and counselling. The organisation is working towards the Investors in People (IiP) award, and in future it may be possible for staff to work towards a recognised award in guidance.

B Functions, target groups and content

The Northwest Economic Network states that it 'is committed to the economic and social regeneration of the areas it serves, and to enabling local people to have greater control over their lives on an individual and collective basis, by increasing their economic success'. The Skillshops are the human resources strand of the network, aiming to improve the skills and qualifications of the local communities in order to maximise the employment and training opportunities available to local residents.

The two Skillshops centres aim to offer one-stop shops for clients seeking vocational guidance and counselling and information on provision of specific training courses which have been set up by the Northwest Economic Network to prepare clients for entry into the labour market. There is a commitment to working with the unemployed from areas of social deprivation. There is specific targeting of ethnic minorities and there have also been some courses set up with the aim of helping women in particular to re-enter the labour market.

Skillshops' Mission is as follows: 'To assist the local community in the Northwest to play its part in the regeneration of the local economy, by providing high quality economic development services which will enable a greater degree of prosperity for all residents and organisations in the area'.

Vocational guidance and counselling are carried out in the Skillshops by human resource advisers; they carry out career and employment counselling in all fields of employment, education and training. Those either seeking employment or seeking to improve their position within the labour market are offered advice on producing CVs tailored to the demands of the particular vacancy concerned. Assistance with application forms and letter writing is also provided. There is access to a careers library which contains up-to-date college and university prospectuses, and information on local training opportunities. Unemployed clients are given access free of charge to newspapers, stationery, photocopying and stamps.

Training courses have been set up to meet the needs of the unemployed in the Northwest Economic Network catchment areas. Specific attention has been paid to the needs of people from ethnic minority backgrounds, women and the young unemployed. One such course falls under ESF Priority: Pathways to Employment, targeting those over 25, unemployed for at least 6 months and falling into at least one of the following sub-categories: returners to the labour market, members of ethnic minorities, the disabled, single parents and others with care responsibilities, the homeless, ex-offenders and those requiring English language support.

The six months project is run in conjunction with Glasgow's Stow College and aims specifically to attract women and other returners to the labour market. An integrated package of training and work experience is provided, with personal and learning support including pre-entry and pre-exit guidance to enable beneficiaries to progress to employment or further training opportunities as appropriate. Training in the following areas is offered: information technology, communication and numeracy, learning support and work experience, placements are organised. Childcare is provided in the college and there is assistance with travel expenses.

Another course funded through the ESF targets young people aged between 16-24 years. This is also run in conjunction with Stow College and targets young people from disadvantaged backgrounds - those with a history of school refusal, the homeless, those in care and ex-offenders. Again the emphasis is on personal development and gaining transferable skills - information technology, communication and numeracy skills. Work experience is an element in this course and vocational guidance and counselling, delivered by human resource advisers, is an integral part.

C Access

The Skillshops centre in Kent Road is located in the heart of the catchment area, on a main road well served by public transport. The office is spacious and open planned, fronted by large windows, above which is a prominent and colourful 'SKILLSHOPS' sign.

Clients usually hear about the service by word of mouth, although many are referred to skillshops by the ES, the Careers Service and community organisations. Services offered by Skillshops are all free and available to everyone over the age of 16 living in the catchment areas. Promotional leaflets are distributed amongst organisations which operate within the catchment area, including ethnic minority agencies, Job Centres and youth groups.

D Networking

Networking is an integral part of Northwest Economic Network's activities. It operates as a partnership organisation involving local community groups, the local authority and the ES. The organisation regards people from ethnic minority backgrounds as a priority group, and liaises closely with the Ethnic Minority Enterprise Course (EMEC) (see case study 29) in the targeting of ethnic minorities in the areas served by the two Skillshops centres.

E Outcomes and assessment

In the first period of operation, 1994-95, advice and counselling was provided to 850 clients, resulting in 92 people gaining employment, 214 taking up education and training opportunities, 44 people starting up in business, 467 gaining advice and information and 62 receiving on-going support (source: Northwest Economic Network Strategy 1995-1998). More up-to-date cumulative figures show that 288 clients have gained employment, while 357 have taken up education and training opportunities. Skillshops users can have on-going access to the services offered. Services are commonly used through 'drop-in' visits.

The Skillshops centre in Kent Road, managed by the Northwest Economic Network, serves an area of high unemployment in Glasgow. Parts of the area include significant proportions of people from ethnic minority backgrounds. Staff in Skillshops are culturally aware, although there is no specialist counselling provision for members of ethnic minority communities. One innovation has been the production of a customer care charter in one of the major community languages, Chinese. This is prominently displayed in the shop front. The open plan arrangement in the office is welcoming and informal, although there is no space for confidential interviewing in private rooms.

Clearly, there have been considerable successes in attracting those at risk of social exclusion towards seeking advice and counselling and taking up suitable training, education and employment, despite the fact that, in common with other publicly-funded agencies, there are resource constraints. Urban Programme funding from the Scottish Office ended in October 1998. Northwest Economic Network would then apply to the Glasgow City Council's Social Strategy Committee for a further five years funding. This would provide the Skillshops with long-term security and strength.

Case study no. 36

New Routes to Jobs, Training and Enterprise

New Routes to Jobs, Training and Enterprise
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Contact person: David Rankin, Project Manager

Philosophy

'People must be empowered to make their own decisions about their own futures.'

A History, context and general structure

New Routes was started in 1990 by the Blantyre Community Learning Group, local volunteers who saw the need for a vocational guidance and counselling service for this area of high unemployment. The Board is made up exclusively of local people, supervised by a local government officer. Formerly funded under the Urban Aid Programme for the maximum allowed seven years, New Routes is now funded by a block grant from South Lanarkshire Council and has suffered a reduction of over 50 per cent, to around £115,000 for the current year. Funding is now granted for only one year at a time. The staff has been cut by half, and there are no longer Job Enablers for young and disabled people, a Flexible Learning Unit (which was accredited to deliver IT) or a receptionist employed by New Routes. Despite a very positive independent evaluation, stressing its value as a guidance service, the new funder has specified a great focus on direct access to employment, leaving less time to spend on confidence-building, guidance, counselling and pre-vocational training.

There are five full-time and two part-time staff (including a cleaner), all on 12-month contracts. Academic qualifications are not required for front-line staff: far more important are empathy and an awareness of people's fear of bureaucracy and difficult life situations. It is particularly important that the first person a new user speaks to should be friendly, whether this is a receptionist, a janitor or an employment counsellor. The training budget has been cut, and training now tends to be available only for specific programmes undertaken by New Routes.

B Functions, target groups and content

New Routes aims to offer the best, most realistic and relevant service to its client group. It enables people to make their own decisions having been made fully aware of what options are available to them. Many people do not achieve their full potential and New Routes hopes to assist them to do so and to help them overcome the barriers that prevent them from improving their situation. Successful outcomes include helping people to move from a position of being unable even to apply for jobs to begin doing so, as well as moving directly into employment, but under the new funding arrangements there is now less emphasis on the 'soft outcomes'.

New Routes offers both individual labour market counselling, group sessions, including women-only groups, work preparation courses for the long-term unemployed in its own workshops and help with job-search. Currently there are no longer grants or financial help available for users except when participating on specific courses, such as those funded through the ESF. Computerised advice and guidance packages are available by appointment. Users are encouraged to comment on the service and there are post-course evaluation forms. They are periodically followed up to find out the impact of the guidance and counselling but staff cuts have made this more difficult. New Routes has just started running an intermediate labour market scheme in Lanarkshire, in which unemployed people are given legal paid employment contracts for a limited period, thus providing valuable job experience and a sense of worth, but this is expensive and may be run down when Welfare to Work comes onstream. Overall, however, the content has had to be cut since Urban Aid funding ended.

C Access

The service is open to all and is free, with no limit of time. Those who find employment may continue to use the service if they need to. It is a drop-in service, located in a shopping centre and in attractive, carefully-designed premises, such that people whose confidence is very low can see the internal layout in from the outside. Free up-to-date information leaflets are available for people to drop in and take away, including college and university prospectuses for a wide range of courses, from extra-mural to accredited. There is an emphasis on providing a non-threatening environment. Unfortunately staffing cuts mean that New Routes, which now shares the building with the Integrated Benefits Service (IBS, which gives information on housing, benefits, debts, council tax and so on), the Careers Service and Enable (training for disabled people), has lost its receptionist and the reception desk is now staffed by a clerk from IBS.

The most frequent way in which users find out about New Routes is by word of mouth or by simply seeing the service while visiting the shopping centre

> Ian had been continuously employed for 24 years when suddenly he found himself made redundant: 'I needed to restructure my C.V. This has all the jobs that are going. You get access to newspapers. The Job Centre weren't all that helpful. It's more a place to sign on ... This is quite a comfortable place to plod through job adverts. The advice is there if required. I managed to get employment after a two-month period. I'm now in full-time employment. My wife went back into office work. She pops in here now and again. It's basically like a drop-in centre. She's looking for a career change. She used the word processing and the sign language course ... This place is useful for the people that are really wanting to work. Agencies are a bit un-useful. I was in the brick industry. I'm now working for a builder's merchant. So basically I got back into the same line of business ...
>
> 'In today's market place there's no job for life. So a place like this is fairly essential in today's world ... I'm still looking for something better, but take what's going...especially when you've got the mortgage and family to look after'.

New Routes makes active attempts to advertise its services. Information about New Routes has been inserted in parish magazines and even announced from the pulpit. Specific programmes are advertised in the local press. Scottish Television operates a service whereby voluntary agencies are given a slot in commercial breaks, free of charge, (known as the 'Box 2000' service, since enquirers can use this box number irrespective of which service has been advertised) and New Routes has used this facility. Some users are referred to the service by agencies such as the Careers Service, the ES, Social Work and Community Education.

Methods to help people once they have accessed the service include:

- access to financial help: there is also a case for a grant scheme to help people who need money, for example, to travel to an interview, or to buy working boots or tools or suitable work or interview clothes. The initial costs of returning to employment can be prohibitive without some kind of advance on salary or loan or grant.
- sessions in the skills of self-presentation, often valued more by local employers than specific job skills (which can be taught on the job).

D Networking
New Routes works closely with the Careers Service and the ES. It has some contacts with the Lanarkshire Development Agency (a LEC) and networks with other local organisations in an attempt to offer an overall service to the local community. Networking, for example with local employers and local community groups, is now restricted because of shortage of staff but is still carried out as far as possible.

E Outcomes and assessment
Since New Routes no longer has its own receptionist, accurate numbers of enquirers are not currently available, but it is estimated that 120 people per week access the service. More informative is the assessment carried out in 1996 (Mackay & Murray 1996). The survey found that females make up 59 per cent of the users. Adults aged 20 and over comprise 83 per cent of users. Nearly a third have no qualifications, and a further half have only school or vocational qualifications below Higher National level. The majority (64 per cent) were unemployed when they first used New Routes, with males more likely to be unemployed than females. The most common means by which people became aware of this service were by word of mouth (37 per cent) and 'just passing the shop front' (36 per cent). Motivations for first using the service varied between men and women: men were more likely to seek information on job vacancies or assistance with job search, while women were more likely to seek to increase their confidence. The majority were also using the ES and newspapers and journals to look for information and assistance.

The level of satisfaction with New Routes was very high, at 90 per cent. Virtually all users felt that the staff were 'helpful and approachable' and provided 'help relevant to their needs'. They reported two kinds of outcome: economic outcomes included improvement in employment position (43 per cent); improvement in job prospects (35 per cent); improvement in earnings (21 per cent); prepared to look further afield for jobs (63 per cent). Qualitative outcomes included an improvement in skills (38 per cent); improved attitude towards training (37 per cent); increase in confidence (78 per cent); more aware of available opportunities (59 per cent). Furthermore, 78 per cent said they had a greater understanding of their skills and abilities and 73 per cent said they were more likely to seek education and training. Three-quarters stated that these improvements were due at least partly to New Routes.

Over the previous five years, almost 900 people per year used the service, making an average of nine visits. Each year over 400 of these who were previously unemployed or in education or training went into employment, and over 70 per annum entered education or training. One quarter of those who reported improvement in their position attributed this wholly due to New Routes and another half felt it was mostly or partly due to the service. The most common reasons given by users who had not achieved outcomes were 'lack of finance', family circumstances and problems with childcare. It was estimated that New Routes' ***direct annual contribution*** to the positive outcomes amounted to 26 per cent (that is, 98 jobs) of all employment secured by unemployed users; 56 per cent (20 jobs) of all employment secured by users previously in education or training; and 58 per cent (41 places) of all education or training places secured by unemployed users. This is impressive, even when taking into account a certain amount of double counting as individuals first accessed education or training and later jobs through New Routes. The research team felt, indeed, that the estimates of additionality were conservative, and the real effect of New Routes is even greater.

The major strength of the service is the non-threatening, non-judgmental environment. People are at all times encouraged to make their own decisions and the freedom of access is important. New Routes is now limited by its funder and the requirement to follow council instructions as to what they are allowed to provide. Within these restraints, however, the staff try to respond to the needs of their users and provide as wide-ranging a service as possible. New Routes still delivers training, but is restricted in delivering training below level 2 (roughly equivalent to school qualifications gained at age 16). It cannot deliver training below this level, even though 'soft' learning is widely recognised as an effective route towards 'harder' learning and eventually employment. Instead users have to be referred to other providers for further progress, though it is not considered user-friendly for people with low confidence to have to change agencies. It is thus less of a 'one-stop shop' than it was. The current yearly funding model means that it is very difficult to develop even medium-term plans and affects staff morale.

Childcare facilities are now limited and home visits are no longer possible because of staff cuts. Outreach initiatives are currently being investigated by the local council but these would require an increase in staff. Nevertheless, New Routes has a range of ideas, previously activated, on generating access, given the funds (these have been incorporated into our recommendations). They stress that access must be voluntary, whether to the general service or to specific programmes; hence people need to know about the service and to be motivated to use it. The future of this project, which was a model of its kind, is uncertain, since its continued existence is dependent on the decision of the local council. The recent local government reorganisation left many of the smaller councils struggling, and it is to be hoped that, once transitional problems are ironed out, more secure, long-term funding will be found and New Routes enabled to expand once again to the multi-faceted service of previous years. The sharing of the building with IBS is potentially a strength, since New Routes users often require information and advice on housing, social security benefits and so on, and can therefore be referred to IBS without having to leave the building. It is possible that the services using the building will be combined, which would in many ways be useful to users.

The local council is hoping to benefit from Welfare to Work schemes, which would be delivered by New Routes and contain a guidance element. This, however, introduces an element of coercion which is deliberately absent from the service and thus mitigates against successful outcomes. In addition, it will introduce into the present team a series of people on short-term contracts, detracting from staff solidarity and the ongoing sharing of skills and experience typical of a settled team with a longer-term commitment to the needs of users. The danger is that the ethos of New Routes, which is particularly designed to facilitate the access of the most disadvantaged people in the area, could be submerged. Grassroots organisations staffed by people of similar background to users but trained in vocational guidance and counselling should be nurtured for their strengths, not turned into the kinds of bureaucratic service that those at risk of social exclusion most fear.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GUIDANCE SERVICES AND POLICY-MAKERS

This report is based on lessons and good practice from the case studies; on a literature survey; on interviews with representatives of the social partners; and on interviews (face-to-face, by letter and by email) with a range of experts in the fields of adult vocational guidance and social exclusion. The names and positions of interviewees are listed separately at the end. Some of our experts will not agree with all of our conclusions.

Our recommendations concerning access are arranged according to five aspects of access to vocational guidance:

- putting guidance on the mental map (of both policymakers and people at risk of social exclusion)
- working with other agencies and networks
- taking the service to where people are
- bringing people into the central service
- creating the most appropriate environment

These are not all discrete categories: for example, outreach activities in themselves raise the profile of guidance generally. We then go beyond access issues. We discuss British employers' requirements and what vocational guidance can do to help people meet them. Last but not least we discuss the most basic access issue of all: the provision of good-quality guidance, as part of an apparently seamless service, either specialised or mainstream, with appropriately trained staff, a holistic and practical approach and secure funding.

ACCESS

Putting guidance on the mental map

The role of policymakers

The free newspaper distributed on behalf of Gorbals Initiative (see case study 32) had an unexpected outcome, in that its biggest impact was on policymakers. Given the generally low profile of adult vocational guidance and the need for official recognition and support, it is vital that guidance be given a permanent and important place on their 'mental map'. For this reason, the National Advisory Council for Careers and Educational Guidance (NACCEG) includes major employers and government observers as well as education and guidance bodies and associations (Watts et al. 1996).

Current initiatives such as Learning Direct and the University for Industry (UfI) are good examples of what policymakers can do to publicise learning provision. People already have some idea of learning, however, because they have been to school, but even when they have received careers advice at school, this does not acquaint them with the concept of adult vocational guidance nor how it can help them (Rudge 1996). For people in disadvantaged groups, 'vocational guidance is unlikely to be the first need that they identify ... people tend to articulate their needs more in terms of training and/or jobs and only come to guidance as a means of addressing specific difficulties' (Claire Tyers, letter, 15/07/98). There is therefore a need for generic publicity (on a national scale) and marketing (national or regional) to acquaint people with what guidance actually is as well as where they can obtain it. This could form a basis for individual agency marketing. It should also be made clear that services are free for those without an adequate income.

One resource with great potential is national television, which has a duty not only to entertain but to educate and inform. One initiative being planned in the United Kingdom is a BBC series called Career Moves, which aims to 'offer educational and adult guidance to viewers who are not currently in touch with recognised guidance agencies; to introduce the concept of upskilling and transferable skills; and to encourage the individual to make contact with the recognised agencies and take the next step' (Nimmo 1997). However, if the purveyors of 'soap operas' could be persuaded to introduce characters using or delivering vocational guidance, this would probably do more to place guidance on the mental map than any local initiative.

Enhancing awareness among people at risk of social exclusion

Every service interviewed has found word-of-mouth the commonest way by which people hear about it; the challenge is to get the ball rolling in the first place.

The South-East Cheshire TEC ensured a high profile for guidance from the first, with both initial and continuing publicity. It has been marketed both in a generic way and targeted to specific groups for ESF-funded projects. Although advertisements in local newspapers had little success, articles in these papers did, as did visits to libraries, crèches etc., and colourful posters and leaflets. The TEC also supplied co-ordination for the local guidance network, which includes the Citizens Advice Bureaux, universities and colleges, and the network also maintained a high profile for guidance as well as publicising specific projects. An important aspect is contact with employers, for example, through the formation of a Vacancy and Recruitment Unit in Macclesfield (*Business Bulletin* 1998).

'Many adults have no concept of the term "career" and will not therefore be initially attracted to organisations offering career guidance' (Jackson & Haughton 1998), so guidance must be marketed to show its relevance to the targeted individuals. It should be stressed that the service is free.

One particularly innovative idea by ReDirect (the guidance shop of Renfrewshire Enterprise) is to commission humorous cartoons displayed on buses on selected routes which serve a range of areas, including the most deprived. Each cartoon conveys in plain language one aspect of the service. It has proved important that promotional material is simply written, in the appropriate language(s), tested out before final distribution and has 'a strong local flavour and relevance' (Ingham 1998:9), as well as avoiding offence and condescension. Careers Bradford Limited (Case Study 33) involved members of target groups in the design of publicity materials.

There is no single set of methods that will work - different ones work in different communities (Watson & Tyers 1998a). These are, however, some of the methods successfully used by various projects in different parts of the United Kingdom (see Askham 1998; Blackwell 1998; Ingham 1998; Watson & Tyers 1998b).

- publicity through local school and community newsletters, parish magazines, black and ethnic minority newspapers and magazines, voluntary sector magazines, papers such as *The Big Issue* (sold by homeless people), local directories
- fliers and posters in libraries, shops, supermarkets, post offices, pubs, betting shops, snooker/pool halls, community centres, sports and leisure centres, doctors' surgeries, health centres, community colleges, rent offices, hostels, Citizens Advice Bureaux, churches/mosques/temples, centres for the unemployed, women's centres
- advertising on local radio, including popular music stations
- information printed on bus tickets

- publicity delivered by hand, knocking on doors, paying caretakers to distribute material to an entire estate
- speaking to local groups such as Unemployed Angling Clubs, Unemployed Workers' Resource Centres, parents' groups in nursery and primary schools
- roadshows at local venues, offering free guidance to all adults attending the event; stalls in shopping arcades and markets
- location of guidance shop in shopping centre or high street, such as the Castlemilk Economic Development Agency (CEDA) in Glasgow, the three high street guidance shops established by South-East Cheshire TEC, Skillshops and New Routes (case studies 35 and 36)
- direct requests to current clients or trainees to invite friends or family members to drop in to the service

Even where provision exists and is well-advertised, potential clients may be deterred from accessing it through lack of confidence, the need for childcare or language difficulties (Watson & Tyers 1998a), and many unemployed or low-paid people, especially older ones, believe that they are not capable of further education or training. One EU-funded project discovered the importance of a gradual unpressurised process, from simple but eye-catching information leaflets designed to attract personal enquiries, further details by phone, invitations to attend local information sessions to actual recruitment (Bond et al. 1997). Nevertheless, complementary strategies are needed.

Working with other agencies and networks

Guidance on a lifelong basis requires the involvement of many agencies (Watts et al. 1996.) Most likely to produce successful guidance initiatives are partnerships of various kinds:

- Adult guidance networks are essential. These include school, college and university guidance services, the Careers Service, services for adults by employers and intermediate labour market organisations, government agencies such as the ES and the voluntary and private sectors. Collaboration between agencies includes networking to aid effective referrals of clients; joint marketing to publicise guidance generically in the local area; joint bids for project funds; harmonising procedures and defining quality standards; sharing and exchanging skills; and integrating services and area funding.
- Partnerships with local providers of learning allow a two-way exchange of information: not only is the guidance service aware of learning opportunities, the learning provider can be made aware of the types of courses that are needed. In some cases such courses can be delivered in the guidance service premises or at an outreach location.
- Partnerships with employers, employers' organisations such as Chambers of Commerce and local economic regeneration agencies are vital for maintaining up-to-date labour market information, speedy notification of vacancies, work placements and so on. Workplace learning initiatives also need encouragement and support (Sutherland 1998), as does the recognition that older workers constitute a potential resource rather than a burden (Ford 1996; McKay & Middleton 1998).
- Low-earning fully-employed workers are a hard group to reach (Ingham 1998). Notwithstanding all are not trade union members, there is great potential, largely unrealised, for working with trade unions. These exist to serve the interests and needs - including education and training - of their members (Payne & Thomson 1998). All employees are now vulnerable, to varying extents, as security of

employment declines and employers look for a greater range of high-level skills among their employees. Nevertheless, a large minority of employees receive no training from their employers, particularly those in SMEs or on short-term or part-time contracts; and much of what training exists is limited in scope and cannot be classified as 'lifelong learning'. Today, therefore, the need for vocational guidance and counselling for employees is becoming more and more important. Trade unions are in a good position both to advocate and, with proper training, deliver information, advice and guidance to employees as well as communicating the value of lifelong learning both to employees and employers. Trade union activists could be trained quite quickly in activities associated with guidance: providing information; pointing individuals to sources of professional guidance; encouraging and supporting learners; conducting learning needs analyses; and negotiating provision with employers (Ford and Watts 1998). Non-union members are likely to hear of these activities from unionised colleagues.

- Active collaboration with other agencies such as Social Work departments, Immigration, the probation service or the prison service can be even more valuable than networking and referrals. Prisoners, for example, may well become isolated on discharge but will know of at least one service they can contact on leaving prison. Guidance for homeless people needs to involve collaboration with housing agencies.
- Involvement at some level of non-guidance personnel working in official agencies, public libraries, such as the police and housing associations (Watson & Tyers 1998a), local councillors, 'health and social workers, home care workers, health visitors and district nurses, doctors, probation officers, those working in religious organisations and union officials (and) such initiatives as family learning centres, family literacy schemes, neighbourhood projects, community education, community development and home-school liaison' (Blackwell 1998; Jackson & Haughton 1998). A good example of this approach is outlined in Case Study 33, Careers Bradford Limited.
- Involvement with community organisations, tenants' associations, women's centres and so on can help to reach people with little contact with officialdom. In addition, part of the value of using local people, including those who themselves are members of socially excluded groups, is that this enables their voice to be heard: they can make their own expert input. Thus guidance services can act as a link between disadvantaged people and policymakers where there is no other direct link.
- There is a need for guidance services to make contact with the many local black and ethnic minority organisations (over 15,000 in Britain). As one activist is quoted as saying, 'There are groups who travel to the other side of the world to make links, but who have not met a Black group down the road' (Ferdman 1998:38).
- Offering basic guidance training to local people, as well as the personnel of other agencies, who can become 'barefoot guidance workers' (Tuckett 1997).

Working through community groups will not reach all individuals: 'the same factors that inhibit a long-term unemployed person finding a job also appear to inhibit their involvement in voluntary and community activity' (Macfarlane 1997:65). So the challenge remains of access for those who are isolated. Possibilities here include befriending and mentoring schemes, using existing and past clients as well as community-based workers and collaborators.

The pitfalls, as well as the importance, of working with non-guidance agencies and groups are highlighted by Watts and McCarthy (1997). It is not always easy to identify the appropriate individual and agencies and the delivery of advice and guidance proper requires specialist training and experience (Watson & Tyers 1998a).

Although the majority of public libraries deliver open learning, training in educational guidance has not developed as rapidly as learning provision (Allred 1998).

Nevertheless, carefully designed collaboration can overcome some of these difficulties. 'The deliverers of these first-stage services do not need to be highly qualified; they do, however, need to be visible, accessible and locally credible' (Tyers, letter, 15/07/98; see also SWA Consulting 1998). It is advisable, therefore, to focus on existing community groups which already have a high profile and a positive image, thus reducing the lead time for activities. The level of commitment and the vital necessity for communication between all partners must be agreed at the outset and it is crucial that the people and organisations involved be fully involved at every stage (Ingham 1998; Watson & Tyers 1998a).

- Finally, closer links with organisations working directly to combat social exclusion are a vital access route. Two examples of the potential of organisations devoted to combating social exclusion are the Poverty Alliance and refugee networks.

The Poverty Alliance, based in Glasgow, trains community activists, helps groups make funding applications and helps to set up services such as an advice helpline. In its work with the poor, the most important groups it comes across are lone parents, the young, black and ethnic minorities, women and the long-term unemployed. Although most of its work is carried out in urban areas, it is also active in rural areas. It accesses the poor through its close working relationship with community organisations and professional community workers. Requests for help come from community groups rather than the Poverty Alliance directly offering help. Instead the service markets itself through mailshots, contacts with local councillors, attendance at conferences and through its networks - the Poverty Alliance Network (with around 90 organisations), the community-based Communities Against Poverty Network and the European Anti-Poverty Network. It is developing a Web page, including a bulletin board for contributions from those who access it. Currently the Alliance has no formal links with guidance services.

For many refugees on first arrival the most useful resources are refugee networks, run by volunteers who are themselves refugees; but since legislation is so complex and changing, there is a need for professional organisations to give guidance in collaboration with these networks (Pile 1997:17). One survey found that 90 per cent of Vietnamese refugees to the United Kingdom had had contact with their own community group but only 6 per cent had participated in groups organised by British people (Carey-Wood et al. 1995, Duke & Marshall 1995). Although some networks are in touch with guidance agencies, others are not. Nevertheless, the Refugee Council Training and Employment branch has found community networks its biggest source of clients.

Taking the service to where people are

It is estimated that 80-85 per cent of clients' needs are met by information and advice, without the need for guidance. Such information need not, therefore, be confined to guidance services but should be available where people go, such as shops and libraries, with the address of the nearest service included for those who do need guidance. Thus, in some cases a full vocational guidance service is offered on an outreach basis; in others only initial advice and guidance are given; and some involve other agencies helping clients to access a guidance service (Jackson & Haughton 1998).

Outreach guidance services are important in a variety of contexts: for example, there are rural areas with poor transport services and far from any information and guidance provision (Watts & McCarthy 1997). In urban Britain, too, an evaluation of twelve Demonstration Outreach Projects in educational guidance affirmed the value of taking the service to estates where 'clients would often refuse to travel any distance from their homes' (Ingham 1998:10). Those most in need of help are often reluctant to take advantage of a formal service, especially if it is located in formal-looking premises, and a key feature is the use of familiar, non-threatening locations (Jackson & Haughton 1998). Thus, 'reaching and gaining the confidence of target groups (...) has been central to project initiatives' (Watson & Tyers 1998a).

There are different forms of outreach service:

- ICT solutions are clearly of great value in rural areas, though not all clients are comfortable with technology and if used alone ICT risks increasing rural isolation (Ryley 1998). Technology can support guidance work but not replace expert human guidance (Chivers 1997). This does not mean, however, that there is no place for ICT.
- Telephone Helplines can give initial information and advice or direct clients to local guidance providers. It is helpful if such services are freephone (see Case Study 30, Continuing Education Gateway).
- Regular outreach sessions in an accessible local venue can overcome barriers created by poverty and lack of confidence.
- Home visits are sometimes appropriate but need to be undertaken with great care. Not only are they expensive, but the experience of social workers shows that they can be dangerous.
- Mobile guidance buses, such as Step Up to Adult Learning in Glasgow, or trailers, operate in some parts of the United Kingdom, offering a full information, advice and guidance service (Clayton 1998).
- Access can also be facilitated for those unable to access the main office by means of a peripatetic service spending a day or half a day per week on each housing scheme, using community centres or church halls and using local groups to advertise the service.

Rural Broadnet is using information technology to help people in distant and isolated communities access educational guidance through video-conferencing from ICT centres set up in a hamlet and a small market town in rural Shropshire (Cheeseman et al. 1998:21).

One successful pilot scheme was the provision of educational guidance in three large inner city general medical practices in Gloucester (Allies 1997). Another, the 'Off the Streets and Into Work' project for the homeless found that the most effective way to reach the target group is to conduct regular outreach sessions at, for example, hostel drop-in centres. It is very important for staff in these establishments to take an interest in the work and to identify potential clients via the key working process. Holding a session on a regular basis is important. The work of the vocational guidance team can be enhanced by holding an information day at a hostel to which representatives from adult education, local colleges and training providers are invited. This provides the client with an informal, non-threatening way of getting information.

Outreach is not without its disadvantages. Finding suitable and reliable premises can be a serious problem (Ingham 1998) and it may not be possible to offer all resources in a community setting (Jackson & Haughton 1998). Nevertheless, 'while individuals will need to overcome these barriers (difficulty or reluctance to leave their local area) at some point, the initial steps are almost definitely easier if taken locally' (Watson & Tyers 1998a).

Bringing people into the central service
There are limits to what can be delivered on an outreach basis. A central service might well have a careers library, an open learning centre, a greater number of user-friendly computers for clients' use, courses delivered on-site, a full-time crèche and longer opening hours. For Careers Bradford Limited (Case Study 33) the ultimate aim of outreach is to bring people into the better facilities of the central service (Watts & McCarthy 1997).

South-East Cheshire TEC takes the view that the experience of coming into the town and the official premises is good practice for entering the job market, as most people need to travel a certain distance to work, and for becoming (re)acquainted with a more formal atmosphere. Hence each of the three boroughs (Macclesfield, Congleton and Crewe & Nantwich) served by the TEC has a high street guidance shop and it has always been the TEC's practice to deliver services in these central locations. Although in a semi-rural area, most people have cars and there is also good public transport. Each town has a market once or twice a week, which brings people in from outlying districts. In any case, the shops are welcoming, pleasant and open-plan.

Location and appearance are, then, important. In addition, services should be open not only in the day but, at least once a week, at times when low-paid day workers can access the service.

Creating the most appropriate environment
Many people have had negative experiences of the ES, of other official agencies and in some cases of learning. It is important to bear this in mind when creating the service environment. It should also be made clear at the outset that the service is confidential.

First impressions of the service are particularly important. Users low in confidence need to find initial contact with the service - especially the central service as opposed to outreach - easy and approachable. Access to the service should be viewed both from the physical and the psychological point of view. It helps if the building is 'friendly' in outward appearance, in that its purpose and appropriateness are clear and it is easily apparent from the outset how to negotiate entry to and use of the premises (e.g. New Routes, Case Study 36). This is not always possible, but however unpromising the approach to the building, the interior should be bright and welcoming, with clear signposting. It is helpful if the reception area is placed as far from the entrance as possible, to allow users to orient themselves or simply to browse among the information, written in community languages, that should be placed next to the entrance; but wherever the reception area is, the receptionist should be both friendly and helpful. Where the first contact is by telephone, or the service is a telephone helpline, the same applies; and there should be an ansaphone service for out-of-hours callers to request appointments. Waiting times for appointments should be as short as possible. Simple things like the offer of tea or coffee while waiting can be encouraging. There should be a clearly marked area where smoking is allowed.

One useful model is that of a Bristol guidance shop. Most of the space is taken up with information, and clients can browse without necessarily being approached by staff. There are posters informing them of the existence of advice and guidance within the shop, and uniformed personnel with customer care experience (rather than training in guidance) offer help only to people they perceive as needing more than information. Those who do want advice advance further into the building for this. The furthest recesses of the building are confined to guidance, and it is here that the reception desk is located.

Guidance counsellors should be approachable but also down-to-earth and realistic. The guidance process is not necessarily a comforting one, but its more intimidating aspects can be borne by the client once his/her confidence is won.

BEYOND ACCESS

There are many barriers to making the first step out of social exclusion: psychological (low self-esteem and clinical depression are common effects of poverty) and economic (the financial costs of education, relevant training or even getting to an interview or sending applications). Once the first step towards vocational guidance has been taken, professional services are needed which understand these barriers, treat people with respect, motivate them and offer incentives and concrete assistance to realise their aims.

Meeting employers' requirements

For the majority of clients, the desired goal is a job, whether immediately or after education/training. Contacts with employers, therefore, and knowledge of their current labour requirements are vital for vocational guidance services. In this section we summarise what British employers perceive as their needs; what vocational guidance can do to help people meet them; and making and maintaining contact with local employers.

Social exclusion affects employers as it diminishes the pool of talent available for hire and, in the case of low-paid workers, its relationship with physical and mental ill-health affects health and safety at work, absenteeism through stress and so on. At the same time, in-depth interviewing for recruitment is seen as an unnecessary cost for employers now that jobs are no longer for life, so people are needed who already have the attributes or potential to become productive employees. Beyond specific skills and experience (see Anderson & Marshall 1998), such attributes include the following:

- the 'values and attitudes compatible with work', that is, to be appropriately prepared for work in its broadest meaning, including caring, voluntary, community and other forms of unpaid work
- literacy and numeracy, although employees do not necessarily need formal qualifications
- computer skills - increasingly sought by employers
- ability to work with others - it is important to understand the social context of businesses; employees need to be able to fit into teams and deal with people not only within the company but also in some cases with people outwith the company or from other countries and cultures
- self-esteem - lack of self-esteem is a problem for employers, who need employees with inner belief in themselves which enables them to cope with change
- the confidence and ability to look for ways of solving problems
- a positive attitude towards learning - enlightened employers see the importance of this, so that employees will build on rather than rest on existing qualifications or learning
- the development of learning skills - even more important than the subjects studied
- career management skills

All of the above are subsumed in the notion of 'employability':

> 'The possession by an individual of the qualities and competences required to meet the changing needs of employers and customers [whether paying or not] and thereby help to realise his or her aspirations and potential in work' (Confederation of British Industry [CBI] 1998:6).

The CBI believes that guidance services have a role to play in enhancing individuals' employability, either directly in the guidance process or through directing clients towards appropriate learning opportunities. To maintain employability individuals need to be able to evaluate both their own potential and to demonstrate that they have these qualities, through relevant qualifications, references and testimonials, a portfolio, a record of achievement, interviews or tests. Guidance can help people identify for themselves what they are capable of doing. It is also important that services have up-to-date information about local labour market supply and demand. Small employers in particular can benefit from the existence of vocational guidance, as they have few resources with which to develop their staff, and workers in SMEs often suffer low self-esteem, an antipathy to formal education or training, an ignorance of nearby opportunities and no grasp of 'employability' (Jones 1998).

One priority for action, therefore, is the extension and consolidation of high-quality impartial careers education and guidance, accessible to all and at all stages of life: at school, when employed, on the point of redundancy or unemployed. Provision should be increased and should be as close to the user as possible. This is seen primarily as the role of government and providers of learning, but it is suggested that employers also have a role in providing guidance for young people, adults when employed or made redundant and those about to retire.

From the point of view of employers, the most important elements of guidance are:

- a realistic chance of guiding the client towards employment, work experience or voluntary work, through good contacts with local employers and sound local labour market information
- sessions in confidence-building and assertiveness
- work preparation courses
- links to basic education, ICT, practical training options and other forms of learning
- (self)-assessment of prior learning, qualities and potential

Hence, services must work with employers, not only to generate a supply of work placements for clients but also so that they know what employers are looking for. At the same time there is a need to educate them, particularly SMEs, who often give their workers little support for lifelong learning (Jones 1998). This two-way exchange could take place in fora and focus groups of employers, guidance practitioners and facilitators.

Services can also put clients in direct contact with employers and vice versa. New Routes (Case Study 36) has held Open Days and working-in days, events organised with one specific employment field in mind. Local employers were invited along to present what they do. At these days employers have given out application forms and in some cases conducted initial aptitude tests during the event and arranged interviews.

Existence of provision

The *sine qua non* of the above recommendations is that guidance provision exists at all. The OECD (1995) recommended that unemployed people should have the right to one hour per month of vocational guidance, and that there should be one counsellor for every 100 unemployed. We would argue that vocational guidance should be available not only to the unemployed but also to those in ill-paid insecure jobs and people not registered unemployed. In general, guidance provision is very poor and unevenly distributed: in some areas there is none, in others there is duplication of services, leading to unhelpful competition and potential confusion for the client. Unfortunately the competition between different guidance providers, including those linked to educational providers, raises questions about the impartiality of their guidance; and there is also potentially unhelpful competition among adult guidance services which charge fees (Watts et al. 1996). Above all, the market model of guidance is not suitable for combating social exclusion.

A seamless service

Guidance should appear to the client as a seamless service, but too often this is not the case. Already we see some New Deal clients being passed from pillar to post - one client was referred successively to three different organisations. The more vulnerable the group, the more important this is. For example, all agencies concerned with people who are homeless or in housing need - housing services, social services, careers services, colleges, TECs and so on - need to work in partnership, and appear seamless to the person. Vocational guidance must include information and advice not only on learning and employment but also on housing and benefits, and personal counselling should be available. But how can the need for a seamless service be reconciled with the need for specialist expertise?

One possibility is to have different kinds of related service in the same physical location, so that, for example, a client needs only to go to a different room in the building. This might be on a limited scale, e.g. an adult vocational guidance service located within a Job Centre, or a New Deal office located within a guidance service premises; or the same premises might have a wider range of agencies, advising on, for example, benefits, housing etc. - 'hub services'. Another is for services to exchange officers when appropriate.

Even where such arrangements do not exist, it is important that services do not try to retain clients who have exhausted their expertise. This happens too often, especially in Community Based Learning projects. Progression and the development of independent learning skills are extremely important. If a client is better served in the long run by perceiving that the service is not seamless, and being referred to another agency or provider, so be it.

Services: specialised or mainstream?

On the one hand, there are many examples of excellent services dedicated to and specialising in a particular client group, in some cases at least partly run and staffed by, for example, ethnic minority personnel, ex-refugees or lone parents. Their friendly, helpful and empathic approach is undoubtedly an advantage, as is the ability in some cases to speak the client's own language, given the expense of interpreting services and the time taken to arrange interpretation. Some client groups have special technical needs; for example, refugees need help to negotiate access to concessionary rates for continuing and further education (Pile 1997:17), information on their employment rights and on the process of application for permission to work, information which is not supplied by the Home Office (Refugee Council 1997). Guidance is also needed to: help refugees prove that they have done what they have done (accreditation of prior (experiential) learning); help them know what their qualifications mean in the United Kingdom and gauge what particular paper qualifications are equivalent to in the United Kingdom; obtain recognition for foreign professional, technical and vocational qualifications; credit transfer and information systems, such as the Educational Counselling and Credit Transfer Information System (ECCTIS) and NARVIK, the database of qualifications currently being assembled; verify the truthfulness of documents; and track records of qualifications gained where documents have been left behind. For the homeless, the offer of free showers by the Beacon Project in London fulfils a different kind of special need.

Although not included as a case study because it is limited to people aged 25 or under, the Foyer Federation is a good model of a holistic, dedicated service. There are over 60 Foyers in the United Kingdom, providing basic accommodation linked to social support, guidance, training and employment, in order to help in their transition to independence young people who are homeless or in housing need, and who often lack confidence and life skills. Many, though not all, of those who are homeless or in housing need 'have a history of disengagement from learning opportunities and from society as a whole' (Wood 1998). Many have been in care, have moved around many times and have had poor experiences of school. Instead of a narrow focus on labour market (re)entry, Foyer encourages people to return to mainstream education, to enhance their quality of life as well as their job prospects (although state policy does not support this, as jobseekers have their benefits cut if they spend more than 16 hours per week on an educational course). The Foyer approach is 'quite an isolated case, which puts forward a very consistent approach, and one, we would venture to say, with a future' (Darmon & Frade 1998:29). We wonder if a mainstream service would be so appropriate to such a vulnerable group?

On the other hand, dedicated services rarely have secure or adequate funding and are particularly vulnerable to funding cuts; for example, the Ethnic Minority Grant disappeared when the Single Regeneration Budgets were introduced. This poses a dilemma: are refugee or community organisations, for example, under-funded and with limited resources, the best to give vocational guidance? There is a case for mainstreaming all guidance services. This would facilitate uniformity of service and quality control, ensuring that no-one would be disadvantaged by living in one area rather than another. Bigger organisations can also provide more specialist help, such as workshops.

An alternative would be national dedicated services for particular target groups but strongly tied into local adult guidance and other networks. The Low Pay Unit and the World University Service, for example, recommend that there should be a national employment agency for asylum seekers, the majority of whom have valuable skills, qualifications and experience, which could be put to good use once mastery of English is acquired both for the individuals and for a society which is suffering from a skills shortage (Pile 1997:22).

Since both REHAB and One Plus (Case Studies 22 and 24) say it is hard to attract ethnic minorities to their services, it seems that for the time being at any rate there is a need for services run and staffed by members of ethnic minorities, until more secure or mainstream organisations recognise the need for bilingual workers in all organisations. Such a recognition would also generate much-needed employment for black and ethnic minority people.

If mainstreaming takes place, service personnel need training in the special needs, capacities and problems of different client groups. For example, many immigrants and refugees arrive with a strong work ethic and are responsible for families left behind. They want jobs which satisfy the work ethic and provide money to send back home (they themselves are prepared and able to live very cheaply, since they are often accustomed to do so). A gendered approach is essential: for example, men and women arrive at homelessness through rather different routes, and the situation of ethnic minority women differs from that of men. At the same time, stereotyping should be avoided: a good service should recognise both the special problems people encounter as members of certain groups or of a particular sex and the differences between individuals, including personality, aptitudes and interests.

Staffing and training

There is a shortage of trained and qualified guidance practitioners relative to the demand for guidance. In the past this was a graduate career concerned primarily with young people, but a single system of qualifications for guidance practitioners is being developed (Watts et al. 1996) which includes subgraduate as well as graduate levels. The reason we advocate the continued involvement of practitioners with poor formal qualifications is that some of the best services arise out of the grassroots level and thus offer an empathic holistic service which treats people as equals.

Local volunteers are a valuable resource, especially when they have a knowledge of local problems, community languages, religions and cultures [not only ethnic minority] (Watson & Tyers 1998a); but there are practical difficulties. Some may lose benefits; most are women, raising questions about childcare provision and whether men will see them as appropriate role-models; and some may find training and accreditation procedures too much of a psychological burden (Ingham 1998). One project used male local councillors as role models in order to overcome these difficulties (Watson & Tyers 1998a). Whether it is ethical to use unpaid labour to combat social exclusion depends on how social exclusion is defined. If social inclusion does not depend on participation in the formal labour market, but includes those with 'viable and socially legitimate lifestyles outside the formal system' then willing volunteers do not present such a dilemma (Watts & McCarthy 1997:51).

Whether staff are paid or voluntary, access to training on an ongoing basis is vital for all involved in the service. Training in handling enquiries from people with low confidence or self-esteem should be extended to all staff who have any contact with the public, including receptionists and janitors; and vocational guidance training should include sociological as well as psychological awareness of the situation of people at risk of social exclusion. Practitioners must have good local information and be trained in collecting and maintaining it. Training should also be given in enhancing access to people who are hard to reach.

Elements of a guidance service for social inclusion

A good service will sell itself through work of mouth, but no service can afford to become complacent. To encourage clients to continue using the service as long as is useful, and to encourage others to do so, the following are helpful:

- a holistic approach which takes into account the client's life circumstances, without, however, straying into areas in which the counsellor is not qualified. For help with the benefits maze, housing problems, health, referral for specific problems to agencies within the same network and with the same empathic values is the most appropriate course of action.
- a crèche with trained workers or, at least, advice on childcare (see South and East Cheshire TEC Ltd 1998)
- grants available for payments of fares, exam fees, tools, appropriate clothes or a haircut before an interview
- professionalism and realistic guidance leavened with an empathic approach and value placed upon the client's prior (experiential) learning, skills and abilities
- sensitivity to cultural and personal factors and genuine consultation with target groups
- visible goals for the client and visible evidence that goals have been reached
- advocacy on behalf of the client, with employers, the ES and education/training providers
- access to learning opportunities with appropriate timing, duration, location and level; to grants; to ESOL; to training courses; to work placements; to supported employment; and to job vacancies
- continued support during training and on accessing employment, if such support is required

Evaluation

It is extremely important that formal as well as informal evaluation take place on a regular basis, to assess how well services are being delivered, but so far this is the exception rather than the rule (Bysshe 1998). This should not be confused with evaluation of outcomes. Funding sources which are dependent on 'hard' outcomes being achieved within a short time are unhelpful for many adults taking the first steps back into the labour market. It can take three years for successful labour market insertion to take place, and sometimes longer. 'Soft' outcomes such as increased confidence are most likely to lead to progression in the long run (Atkinson & Kersley 1998; Douglas 1997) but are much harder to evaluate.

We suggest that evaluation should include assessment of active commitment to enhancing access in the ways we have described above.

Funding

The community sector is extremely important, in offering locally accessible services, but too many good services suffer through short-term, multiple funding, which harms the quality and continuity of programmes and necessitates valuable time spent on fund-raising; and outreach activities are usually the first to suffer when a service experiences reductions in funding. Although there are many good, committed, practical people in the field, guidance tends to consist of a series of short-term measures which end when the funding ends, involving loss of expertise and the need by new services to 're-invent the wheel'. People need long-term support, not short-term projects: 'They become disillusioned if they hear about an opportunity, only to discover it is now no longer available' (Watson & Tyers 1998a:17). ESF funding has proved of major importance but this will not continue to be a viable substitute for national funding.

Funding, whether for national or local services, should not only be more stable and long-term, it should also be increased to allow outreach, continuing staff training, grants for disadvantaged clients and follow-up of clients who have left the service for the purpose of feedback, evaluation and the improvement of practice; and provision must be available for all in need.

We recognise, however, that governments are unwilling to increase spending in this area. NACETT (1997:31) has recommended a redistribution of public funding for post-compulsory education 'to ensure that adults are not disadvantaged compared with young people'. We suggest that the same should be done with vocational guidance. For example, resources could be switched from schools career services; schools and adult services could be combined into a single service, with the proviso that the different needs of children and adults must be recognised and catered for; existing services could share resources; duplication of services in specific areas should be eliminated. There is also a need for the redistribution of resources from large-scale generic services to grassroots, local, specialised services. Whether funding emanates from central government, local government, TECs/LECs/LDCs or any other source, or a combination of any of these, the funding process should appear 'seamless' to the service and necessitate dealings with a single official body.

Above all, a core network of adult vocational guidance services should be made statutory. Ideally, there would be centrally-funded services in all regions, linked to Learning Direct and the UfI, and involving all relevant agencies, including education and training providers, employers, trade unions, careers services, TECs/LECs/LDCs and so on, but staffed by impartial guidance officers with relevant experience and training. Each service should have an outreach arm and mobile services, as well as a strategy of training people to give information and advice locally, in workplaces and so on.

Access to guidance should be open-ended and lifelong, with the proviso that the ultimate purpose of guidance is to help the client progress and make his/her own choices and decisions. Given the prospect, however, that labour market demands will continue to change, people need to be able to return to the service when necessary. It should be free to those who cannot afford to pay: those who can pay will have to pay.

Summary: barriers to access to vocational guidance and counselling services and some ways in which services can overcome these barriers

Barriers	**Strategies**
Informational: 1) ignorance of existence of service 2) ignorance of appropriateness/usefulness of service whose existence is known; 3) formal/voluntary institutions do not know of individual's situation (not registered with any agency)	1) Advertising/slots in programmes on local radio/newspapers/television; leaflets/posters in supermarkets, shopping centres, libraries (including mobile), leisure centres, community centres, schools, Job Centres, local festivals; roadshows; mobile guidance services 2) Publicisation of what the service does. 3) Encourage existing users to contact friends and neighbours who might find the service useful
Networking: agencies with whom a client is in contact do not know of or refer her to vocational guidance and counselling	Ensure relevant agencies (local government departments, Job Centres, benefit offices, Social Work Departments, Citizens Advice Bureaux, libraries, nurseries, primary and secondary schools, community education, guidance Helplines, other guidance services, women's refuges, hostels, trade unions, specialised agencies/charities working with target groups etc.) know how the service can help their users, and maintain friendly contact
Social/geographical: poor or no public or private transport to nearest service - rural areas, islands, outlying housing estates imprisonment	mobile guidance services; computerised access in branch libraries and on mobile library vans; telephone Helplines; on-line help pre-exit guidance sessions in prisons and other closed institutions

Barriers	Strategies
Education: no or few formal qualifications; illiteracy	ask community education services and employers (through Chambers of Commerce) to tell users/employees with low qualifications about the service; advertising in simple language
Domestic situation: childcare/eldercare/othercare, lack of respite care; lack of fixed address	onsite crèche; home visits; telephone Helplines, on-line help; enlist organisations working with the homeless
Work situation: low-paid workers at work during service opening hours	have evening opening at least once a week and/or Saturday opening; telephone helpline
Prior experience: prior bad or unsatisfactory experience of officialdom/bureaucracy/ schools career service, school, dislike of middle-class educated people	ensure service appears/is friendly and approachable from the outside in; use of staff with working-class backgrounds and experiences similar to those of users; minimal use of 'red tape'; advertise 'leisure' courses as well as accredited courses
Psychological: hopelessness, pessimism, fatalism; low self-esteem/confidence; shyness, embarrassment; trauma (e.g. abused women, refugees, the homeless, targets of racism)	befriending schemes; mentoring schemes; 'pre-access' taster sessions; home visits; sessions in local centres; publicise local role models
Physical disability: poor mobility / sight / hearing / spoken communication	home visits; telephone/on-line guidance; free transport
Mental disability: illness/phobia; temporary incarceration	home visits/telephone helpline for agoraphobics; visits to institutions
Learning disability: fear/danger of travel to service	home visits/visits to sheltered accommodation
Racism: fear/danger of travel to service	sessions in local centres; telephone/on-line help in range of languages; home visits; provide transport
Language: poor or no knowledge of local language	use of interpreters; staff training in speaking to people with poor English; referral to specialised agencies; telephone/on-line help in range of languages

Notes

Home visiting is expensive and potentially dangerous. Although listed here in a number of categories, the necessity for them and the benefit accruing would have to be carefully evaluated, and the number per user restricted. In some cases an initial visit followed by telephone contact might be appropriate.

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CHAPTER FIVE

ACCESS TO VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE IN FINLAND

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SOCIAL EXCLUSION IN FINLAND

Disadvantage in the labour market may arise from, for example, employment status, gender, age, disability, ethnicity, rurality, class or religious background. Some individuals suffer multiple disadvantage. The statistics presented here refer to the unemployed and those marginalised groups at risk of social exclusion which are the target groups of the Finnish research.

The unemployed

The figures presented in this chapter are based on the labour force statistics compiled by Statistics Finland. The labour force in Finland comprised 2.5 million persons in 1995: 53 per cent men and 48 per cent women, out of which about 17 per cent overall were unemployed.

Unemployment among Finnish men has traditionally been more common than among Finnish women, and it increased markedly during the first years of the recession in the early 1990s, due to the rapid decrease of jobs in the male-dominated fields such as construction and manufacturing, as well as in the labour market overall. However, unemployment among women has, in the past few years, increased at a faster rate than unemployment among men. This is due to the reduction of jobs in the female-dominated service sector and public sector in particular, and restructuring in the banking and commercial sectors.

Compared to the previous year, in the second year after the 1990s recession there was some decrease in unemployment which was mainly due to decrease in unemployment among men. Unemployment among women, however, remained at the same high level as during the recession, and in 1996 was even slightly more common than among men, for 16.5 per cent of women in the labour force were unemployed, compared to men's rate of 16.1 per cent.

Table 1. The unemployed and unemployment rates (%) in Finland, 1980-1995

	Total		Women		Men	
	Thousands	%	Thousands	%	Thousands	%
1980	114	4.7	53	4.7	61	4.7
1985	129	5.0	56	4.6	73	5.5
1990	88	3.4	34	2.8	54	4.0
1995	430	17.2	198	16.7	231	17.6

Source: Statistics Finland

Unemployment is most extensive in the young age categories and in the oldest among both women and men. It has been exceedingly difficult for young people in the 1990s to find work after completing their studies. The risk of becoming unemployed is higher among persons with a poor educational background. Among the unskilled, the rate of unemployment in the various age groups is clearly higher than it is among the educated and skilled. On the other hand, the recession has to an increasing degree

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extended the risk of unemployment to the highly trained segment of the labour force as well.

The long-term unemployed

Until the latest recession long-term unemployment was not very common in Finland. Since then, it has become a bigger problem: in 1995, the number of people who had been unemployed for at least 12 months was 151,000, a figure which accounts for about 35 per cent of all unemployed. An important factor affecting the employability of the long-term unemployed is age; the long-term unemployed are older than the average unemployed. Out of those unemployed for more than 12 months, 39 per cent had been continuously unemployed for two years or more. Almost three out of four of these are 50 years of age and over. The older workers who have been unemployed for more than two years thus form the core of the long-term unemployed, and their numbers have increased rapidly in the last few years. Many of the older unemployed anticipate receiving their unemployment benefit rather than employment.

Table 2. The long-term unemployed in Finland, 1980-1995

	Total		Women		Men	
	Thousands	%	Thousands	%	Thousands	%
1980	27	26.2	15	28.2	12	23.8
1985	53	35.4	27	36.0	26	34.8
1991*	22	8.8	8	8.1	14	9.2
1995	151	35.7	63	32.9	88	38.0

Source: Statistics Finland[30]

Foreigners

The population of Finland is ethnically more homogenous than the populations of most European countries. The number of foreigners had remained fairly constant at something over 10,000 for a long time. During the 1980s the number of foreigners began slowly to increase yearly. A significant growth of immigration began in 1990 when the Ingrians (ethnic Finns) from the former Soviet Union were granted the status of returning emigrants. The increase in immigration in the 1990s is also due to the inflow of refugees, especially from Somalia and former Yugoslavia. The number of foreigners living in Finland at the end of 1995 was 68,566 accounting for 1.3 per cent of the population.

The alien population in Finland in 1995 included citizens of 155 countries, among whom the largest group were Russians (9,720) and the second largest Estonians (8,466). In fourth position after Swedish citizens came citizens of the former Soviet Union and then the refugee groups from Somalia, the former Yugoslavia and Vietnam. The refugee proportion of all foreigners was nearly 20 per cent in 1995.

The majority of foreign immigrants into Finland in the late 1980s were men, and the same situation prevailed among the alien population of Finland as a whole. Although men made up 52.5 per cent of aliens in 1995, many individual national groups were even more clearly male-dominated. Practically all the Moroccan and Turkish residents in Finland are men. However, an increasingly large proportion of the new immigrants in the 1990s have been women. They are clearly in the majority within the groups originating from Russia and Estonia.

The total population of Finland eligible to work in 1995 was 2.5 million, of which foreigners accounted for 27, 000 or 1.1 per cent. Since the sharpest increase in alien population coincided with the years of recession, unemployment would seem to have emerged as one barrier to integration into Finnish society. The unemployment rate for immigrants increased rapidly during the 1990s and was 49 per cent in 1995. The worst hit by unemployment were refugees, among whom 70 per cent of those eligible to work were unemployed. Outside the refugee population the worst affected by unemployment were the Russians, Moroccans and Estonians. A danger of exclusion from labour market is raised by the generality of long-term unemployment for immigrants.

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[30] All figures are based on the supplementary labour force survey conducted by Statistics Finland each autumn until 1987; since then a supplementary survey has been done every second year. Furthermore, the figures for year 1995 are not fully comparable with the others because of changes in research methods and conducting the survey in spring. (Figures for long-term unemployment presented by the Ministry of Labour are somewhat smaller.)

While the typical immigrant to Finland in the 1980s was still a person returning from Sweden, the majority from 1990 onwards have been from the former Soviet Union, chiefly Russia and Estonia. Ingrians are the largest newly arrived immigrant group. They are citizens of the former Soviet Union who are considered to be of Finnish origin. Most of the Ingrian re-immigrants do not speak or understand the Finnish language.

The foreign-language population in Finland was over 65,000 in the end of 1995. The number of native speakers of other languages living in Finland more than doubled in the 1990s. The most prominent language other than the official languages of Finland (Finnish and Swedish) is Russian with almost 16,000 native speakers, the next most prominent Estonian with close on 9,000 speakers and then English spoken by over 5,000 people as their native language. Although the foreign-language population group and the foreign-citizenship group are of roughly the same size, they are not identical. For example, 10,000 Finnish citizens speak a foreign language as their mother language.

The largest minority group in Finland are the Swedish-speaking Finns, differentiated from the majority population on linguistic rather than ethnic grounds. The total population comprised 295,000 speakers of Swedish as their first language, which is a little under six per cent. Swedish-speakers are not by any means a socially excluded group in Finland.

Disabled persons as jobseekers

By the definition of the Labour Administration a person is considered as disabled when his/her possibilities to gain or to maintain a job are remarkably reduced due to the chronic nature of an illness or disability. Hence, the capacity of an individual person as well as the demands of the work and its duties are dimensions of disability. Despite changes in working life at different times, disability is connected to a weak position in the labour market. The collapse of general employment and unemployment becoming more prevalent have weakened further the labour market position of disabled persons.

Employment exchange statistics of the Ministry of Labour indicate that the number of disabled persons seeking jobs in the employment offices has increased since the 1970s. According to a study by Mannila et al. (1992) disabled persons register as jobseekers more easily and retreat from the labour market less often where a disability pension is not granted. Differentiated annual statistics have been compiled by the labour administration on disabled jobseekers of participation in both vocational guidance and the employment exchange. These groups are partly overlapping, for the same person may have taken part in both vocational guidance and the employment exchange during the same year (see table 3).

The Ministry of Labour has compiled statistics on unemployment among the disabled persons applying to the whole country only since the beginning of the 1990s. In five years the number of unemployed disabled jobseekers has almost trebled when taking into account the same person once per year (in 1990 11,300; in 1995 31,500). The figures for the unemployed in table 3 include all unemployment periods during the year. Just over half of the unemployed disabled jobseekers are women: in 1995 the figure was 56 per cent. At the same time the duration of unemployment has increased;

in 1990 unemployment among disabled persons lasted on the average 22 weeks, 58 weeks in 1995 and the year after 62 weeks.

Table 3. Disabled jobseekers in vocational guidance and in the employment exchange, Finland 1980-1995

Disabled jobseekers	in vocational guidance	in the employment exchange	unemployed
1980	10,500*	17,000	-
1985	11,600	37,700	-
1990	13,700	42,800	35,600**
1995	14,500	60,700	50,900

* information applies to 1981 **information applies to 1991

Source: Ministry of Labour's annual statistics on disabled persons

In 1996 there were 54,880 unemployed disabled persons on the register of the labour administration, an increase of 7 per cent on the previous year. However, altogether 49,300 unemployment periods ended during the same year. Over two out of three ended in consequence of active employment and training measures.

According to the labour administration's diagnosis classification, one out of three disabled persons suffer from rheumatic and locomotory organ diseases, which is the main category of disease. The second disease group among disabled jobseekers are, however, different kinds of mental and nervous problems (20 per cent in 1995). Studies show that disability increases the risk of unemployment and unemployment increases the risk of disability, for unemployment is the cause of psychosocial stress threatening a person's identity and self-esteem. Unemployment often lessens mental well-being and leads into inactivity and social exclusion. As an unemployed person adapts to life outside employment, his/her skills and motivations become weaker and the level of pension-seeking declines. As many as 38.5 per cent of disability pensions are granted for problems with mental health.

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A REVIEW OF OFFICIAL POLICY AND INITIATIVES ON ADULT VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING

There are two guidance systems operating in Finland: the vocational guidance - and educational and vocational information services - run by the labour administration; and the student counselling service provided at educational institutions. Both systems seek to provide individuals with advice and support. In this research we are interested in adult vocational guidance and counselling and hence the services which are provided at employment offices.

The Ministry of Labour is responsible for providing and developing public employment services in Finland. The employment services include employment exchanges, educational and vocational information services, labour market training, vocational guidance and vocational rehabilitation. Based on the Employment Services Act (1005/93) the objective of these services is to support individual employees in their vocational development and placement into work as well as to secure the supply of labour for employers. Services are provided by over 200 employment offices. Services are available to private clients free of charge; some of the services provided for employers are subject to a charge.

The vocational guidance practised by the state is based on the above-mentioned Act, according to which it is the responsibility of vocational guidance to help an individual person solve questions connected with careers and professional development as well as employment. In this, the personal qualities of the client and the opportunities of the fields of work and education must be taken into account.

The content of the vocational guidance provided in the employment offices is specified in the Employment Services Decree (1251/93). With the client's vocational objectives as a starting-point, the vocational guidance is 1) to give comprehensive and impartial information about alternatives in education and working life; 2) to increase clients' self-knowledge and ability to estimate their personal resources; and 3) to help the clients prepare a plan aiming at their vocational progress.

The objective of vocational guidance is to help people resolve issues relating to career choice, placements and vocational development. The clients' personal abilities and the opportunities available in various occupational and educational sectors are taken into account. The most important method of vocational guidance is personal counselling. Depending on the client's situation, one or more guidance sessions may be needed. Psychological testing can be used as an aid if necessary. Guidance may be supplemented also with other examinations and experimentation to find out about the client's health and ability to cope with work.

The Development Working Group for Vocational Guidance (memorandum 1989) set up by the Ministry of Labour defines vocational guidance as facilitation based on understanding the mutual relationships and meanings between a human being, work and education. It is above all a matter of improving the control of life for those in need of vocational guidance, in which an individual person, in changing conditions, needs individual knowledge and guidance exactly for his/her own situation. According to the working group vocational guidance can aim to increase flexibility in the labour market by furthering individuals' professional mobility. Vocational guidance is also regarded as justified for those adults whose objective is to improve their labour market position or quality of life through change of work and education.

Action patterns were developed for small group work in the labour administration at the beginning of 1990s. Its objective is to develop different small group methods to supplement personal guidance. Groups can roughly be divided into informative and guidance groups. The objectives of informative groups is to inform people about the services of the employment office, opportunities for work, for training and practice.

In guidance groups the main task is to enlarge the activity and self-reliance of job seekers. Both modes of group guidance may also be addressed to special groups.

Besides vocational guidance another important form of counselling is the educational and vocational information service. The objective of the service is to support appropriate entry to education and placement in different professions by supplying information on training opportunities, the content of tasks and professions as well as on labour markets (Employment Services Act 1005/93). According to the Employment Services Decree (1251/93) the task of the educational and vocational information service is to counsel clients in matters relating to education and professions. For that purpose data on education and working life is maintained available for counselling staff and clients.

Every employment office offers an educational and vocational information service providing extensive data on education and training, finance for studies and careers. Each of the larger employment offices has a full-time information officer who answers clients' enquiries and provides advice on using the data. The information service is based on a vast supply of data: a computer file system on training and careers, various publications, leaflets and videotapes. The information material is available for the clients in a library-like reading place in the information service premises. Part of the material can be borrowed by the clients. About 50 per cent of the clients are under 25.

There are special rehabilitation services for the disabled arranged by the employment office. In the labour administration a client is defined as disabled when his/her possibilities to gain a suitable job, to maintain or to progress in it are considerably weakened due to some physical and/or psychic injury, illness or deficiency.

Customised vocational guidance, counselling on job placements, training and labour market training are services which are available for disabled people at employment offices. Various check-ups, rehabilitation examinations, expert consultations and job experiments, and training in vocational institutions and on-the-job training are specially designed for disabled people. Support for workplace arrangements facilitating job placements and job retention is available to employers.

There is also a mention of immigrants in the Employment Services Decree (1251/93), according to which the authorities of the labour administration have to track immigrants' placement into the labour market and, if necessary, suggest to other authorities actions which could improve immigrants' adaptation to new working and living conditions.

Guidance elements have been increasingly included in labour market training programmes too. Labour market training is a service which the labour authorities provide for the adult workforce. Its objective is to help people acquire, maintain and develop vocational skills. Training is provided to promote job placement or assist with job retention. Labour market training is offered primarily to the unemployed and to those under the threat of unemployment. People undertaking labour market training are given financial assistance. The allowance paid during training courses is of the same order as the unemployment benefit.

The high rate of unemployment and the difficulties of young graduates in getting their first job has led the universities to create new services. The universities have established activities in careers services to combine job hunting with working skills training. Careers services are responsible for ensuring optimum work placements for new graduates. These services also support the placements schemes of the various faculties, departments and student bodies by building bridges between universities, students and employers. These activities are still quite new today, but in the process of development.

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Training places for vocational guidance workers

Personal guidance within the vocational guidance provided by the labour administration is the responsibility of vocational guidance psychologists who have about six years' university education in psychology. There are some 250 vocational guidance psychologists in Finland. Their basic degree is the Master of Psychology which normally takes between six and eight years to complete. The MA degree in psychology is awarded by six universities in Finland. On average, a total of 165 new psychologists graduate yearly from these universities and 80 per cent of them are women.

Since their university education is vocationally and theoretically general and insufficient, it is supplemented in the labour administration by orientation training for vocational guidance psychologists. The Ministry of Labour organises 55 days' training in vocational specialisation for new vocational guidance psychologists. At the beginning of their employment, every new vocational guidance psychologist takes part in specialist professional training which is often scheduled over several years.

An orientation training system for vocational guidance psychologists has been used for decades. The structure of the system has remained the same, but some variation is found in the duration of the training as well as in the amount of time devoted to it. The contents and methods of training have naturally changed as the tools and methods of guidance have developed. To maintain and develop the professional skills of the vocational guidance psychologists, the Ministry of Labour organises different kinds of supplementary training programmes. Information officers who offer an educational and vocational information service in employment offices have usually had a college-level education, followed by 15 days' specialist training.

To be noted: Vocational guidance officers working in employment offices are trained as psychologists, while the training of school counsellors is based on educational sciences. Student counsellors in the comprehensive schools and upper secondary schools are normally experienced and fully-trained teachers with one year of specialist training. This specialist training is compulsory before an individual is allowed to offer educational or career guidance in schools. There is therefore no generic training for guidance workers in general.

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A BRIEF SUMMARY OF LIFELONG LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Forms of lifelong learning

Since lifelong learning is a very multifarious concept, it is useful at first to look at its different forms. Researchers divide lifelong education into formal, non-formal and informal education, and lifelong learning into these forms respectively.

Formal education is understood as a hierarchically-structured, gradually proceeding education system ranging from basic school to university. Besides academic general studies it includes multiform special programmes and institutions planned for full-time vocational education. Formal education clearly aims at examinations. Hence in the field of adult education, formal education covers degree studies in accordance with the school system as well as vocational qualification examinations.

Non-formal education refers to that part of organised and target-oriented adult education which takes place outside the formal school system (formal education) and which does not aim at examinations. This kind of studying forms an independent whole. Teaching can be organised separately or it can be part of a larger form of action. Non-formal education is mainly based on the educational and learning needs of an organisation or an individual. Popular education, for instance, is for the most part non-formal education. It serves the specific learning needs of special groups of the population. In general, study in this form takes place in very close connection to various societal functions. A large part of working life education is also non-formal such as, for example, company staff training. It has been estimated that in Finland some 1.5 million adults yearly take part in staff training and popular education. Non-formal education is thus a form of education and learning typically connected with adulthood. It is very flexible and generally linked to those functions in which learning is needed.

Informal learning is mainly empirical and non-institutional. It is characterised by a high grade of self-control and self-directed learning. An additional form of lifelong learning is incidental learning, which is non-systematic and hidden, a by-product of other functions. When experiences are consciously used to promote target-oriented learning, one can talk of informal learning. Otherwise it is a question of incidental learning.

Learning in organisations happens only partly through formal educational experiences. Part of the learning takes place in practice at work places in connection with product planning, work development, different forms of participation, temporary posts etc. Adults can also educate themselves completely on their own initiative in their own spare time by, for instance, following professional magazines, obtaining information from libraries etc. This kind of independent, objective-oriented studying can be called self-directed learning. Self-directing learning projects are most common among senior white-collar workers.

The adult education system

According to Statistics Finland the Finnish education system can be roughly divided into three main components: educational institutions within the formal education system, educational institutions outside the formal education system and other systems or structures of training and education. The latter comprises mainly training provided by the employer at workplaces or at in-service training units as well as training provided by various organisations to their members. So Statistics Finland groups education rather differently than stated above. Adult education and training is provided in Finland by about one thousand institutions.

Adult education in the formal education system

Educational institutions within the formal education system are increasingly involved in adult education as well. There are some institutions that specialise entirely in adult education. ***Within the category of general education institutions,*** adult education is provided primarily by senior secondary evening schools, music schools and colleges, sports institutes and folk high schools as well as by adult education centres. Senior secondary evening schools provide education both at the comprehensive and secondary level. Music schools and sports institutes also offer various types of courses for adults. Folk high schools are for the most part private boarding schools supervised by the education authorities. They offer general and vocational education both for young people and for adults. In volume terms the general education institutions with the largest number of adult education students are adult education centres (open colleges). They are typically council-run institutions providing general education for adults, with a heavy orientation towards leisure and recreation. The most popular subjects are arts and various handicraft skills, foreign languages, sports and physical exercise.

Adult education within vocational and professional institutions normally refers to study programmes or courses that are intended for people over 20 years of age. In most cases training requires practical experience on the job. During the past years more and more vocational and professional institutions have begun to arrange adult education such that in 1991 nine institutions out of ten organise training for adults. These institutions arrange much labour market training besides independent courses and training ordered by employers. Special adult education curricula aiming at an examination and advanced training are also popular. People with an upper secondary level of education were more active than other basic education groups as adult learners at vocational or professional institutes in 1990.

Adult education in universities or university-level institutions refers to continuing education organised by separate divisions for supplementary education, to open university education organised in accordance with university degree requirements, and to staff training. The Finnish university network is decentralised. We have a large number of universities (21) in relation to our population (5 million).

Further training is mainly intended for professional people with a university degree. Divisions for supplementary education in the universities operate as separate independent units; one university may accordingly have several affiliated units specialising in further training. The idea of continuing higher education is to be a customer-oriented activity, but the centres also take responsibility for the demands of education policy. The number of students in continuing education centres has exceeded the number of faculty students which also reflects the importance of the role of continuing higher education; this tendency is clearly increasing. From the labour market point of view, the conventional university education organised by the faculties seems to be in serious trouble in bringing demand and supply in education into balance. Adult education will be the focus of the future university because of the need for lifelong learning and because of the needs to transform innovations based on scientific knowledge into practice.

In the universities and centres of continuing education Finland's membership of the European Union has given rise to an accelerating process to become involved in European joint projects in the fields of education, research and employment. Employment training for university graduates has become very important because of the high unemployment rate in Finland. The Finnish government has subsidised this activity remarkably well in recent years and the centres for continuing education have been successful in creating new professional long-term programmes and labour market training for unemployed people to improve their qualifications on the labour market.

Open university education is organised in accordance with curricula endorsed by universities and university-level institutions. There are no specific requirements as far as basic education is concerned. Open university education is provided by universities as well as by summer universities. The courses are provided also at adult education centres and folk high schools. Open university education includes general and subject studies, in-depth studies and special courses. Among open university students, objectives vary a great deal: some are seeking for professional achievement, some are pursuing a hobby and others are aiming at a place on a degree programme in faculties.

The scope of open university instruction was enlarged significantly in 1993 by the removal of the minimum age of 25 for labour policy reasons. The aim of the reform was to alleviate the problems of youth unemployment by offering young people the opportunity to take university courses after the matriculation examination and also giving this opportunity to those students who failed to gain admission to a university.

Other educational institutions within the formal education system but not providing regular education include summer universities and study circle centres. Courses given by them are specifically intended for adults. Summer universities offer professional continuing education, open university education, language and senior secondary school courses as well as other courses. Study centres are run by general education organisations and they arrange study circles, courses and lectures.

Administration. With only a few exceptions, formal education and vocational training in Finland is under the Ministry of Education. These exceptions include children's day care, military training and police and fire training. Labour market training is organised by the Ministry of Labour. The government, the ministries mentioned above and the National Board of Education are responsible for implementing educational policy at the central administration level, but the trend is to increase local involvement in education administration, i.e. to give more power to local municipalities and private educational organisations.

Educational institutions outside the formal education system

Outside the formal education system, there are also large numbers of private organisations offering training and education. Some of these organisations are under government supervision, while others operate on a purely commercial basis. Among the units and organisations that fall into this category are in-service training centres, language schools and language centres, correspondence schools and driving schools. Yet no detailed statistics have been compiled on the activities of educational institutions outside the formal education system in Finland.

In-service training centres or units are often run by employers or employer organisations, or by adult education units set up as private commercial enterprises. Most of the training provided by these centres is in the form of vocational or professional continuing education commissioned by business companies. As from the beginning of 1991 private organisations outside the formal education system have also been licensed to provide education in labour policy. In 1992 almost one-fifth of all people who completed such a course did so within an institution outside the formal education system.

Adult education is also provided by various ideological organisations and associations, such as trade unions and central organisations, producer organisations, Christian and political organisations, etc.. Here the main target group is represented by the membership of the respective organisations. Depending on the organisation, the training or education may be commissions of trust or hobby-oriented, but it can also be professional further training.

Training offered by employer at place of work

Employers have various strategies and methods of staff training. According to the Adult Education Survey 1990 (AES90), the total number of wage earners taking part in staff training in 1990 was around one million. Most of this training is organised at the workplace or own in-service training unit.

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A REVIEW OF OFFICIAL POLICY ON LIFELONG LEARNING

The necessity of individual's continuous learning is not a new idea in Finland. Ideas of lifelong learning reached Finland at the end of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s along with the international recession. When developing a synoptic view on education, UNESCO, OECD and the European Council gave recommendations on lifelong learning which also reflected Finland's educational policy.

The principle of continuous education was one of the starting points when the comprehensive development of the Finnish educational system started in the 1970s. From the point of view of the development of a system for lifelong learning, the first task was to fill the inconvenient educational gaps which were found in large numbers in adult vocational training. Since unemployment was already a problem in the 1970s the first step was to expand and to improve the network of adult vocational training centres. Currently the network covers the whole country and nearly all lines of work. It was not until the end of the 1980s when the law was passed to oblige all Finland's approximately 500 vocational schools to organise vocational training for adults as well. Several educational institutions have founded special adult vocational training departments for this purpose.

The pressure to extend higher education to a larger number of adults had already increased in the 1970s but the actual step forward was not taken until the 1980s. At that time continuing education centres were instituted in all Finland's 21 universities to implement continuing education in their own specialisms, to organise labour market training and to offer open academic education to all interested adults.

Continuous education has clearly been the leading normative principle in Finnish educational planning during the last two decades. It is manifested in several educational political declarations and planning documents stating that continuous education is a central principle in the development of Finland's educational policy. The idea has been strongly expressed in the Government's principal resolutions as well as in the Government's report on educational policy submitted to Parliament in 1990. In the report, the application of the principle of continuous education was taken as a guide to educational policy development.

Besides the principle of continuous education (which delineates lifelong learning particularly from the educational system's viewpoint), in substance a more comprehensive principle of lifelong learning has been for a long time a central aim of Finnish educational policy as well as a frame of reference fostering practical solutions. The present third wave of lifelong learning is centrally related to the rapid developments in science and technology as well as to views on the information society. In the programme of the present Government, the implementation of lifelong learning is connected to co-operation with labour markets. Advancement of lifelong education is also one of the most important aims of the educational administration. The Constitution Act of Finland (969/95) defines lifelong learning as a basic right as follows:

> Every citizen has a right to basic education free of charge. ...The public authorities must guarantee, as further detailed and established by law, all citizens' equal access to basic as well as other education according to his or her abilities and special needs as well as to develop him- or herself without the hindrance of poverty. Freedom of access to science, art and higher education is guaranteed.

Especially in the 1980s and the 1990s the main arguments for lifelong education and continuous education have focused on the new requirements set by working life for employees. Development has been broadly similar in all industrial countries. Nowadays the arguments and implementation requirements for lifelong learning are connected more clearly than before to economic recovery. Education has become a more substantial instrument in intensifying productive activity, preventing and reducing unemployment and facilitating the introduction of technology as well as sustaining and enhancing international competitiveness. Thus the efficiency demands on the society's economy and working life are strongly stressed in the present educational policy discussions as well as in the development of a lifelong educational system.

The Government's resolutions are to be understood as indicative expressions of will at the normative level of educational policy whereas the concretisation of the strategic level rests with the committees and working groups. In March 1996 the Government set up a committee to prepare a national strategy on lifelong learning as well as to formulate proposals for its implementation. The Committee finished its work within the prescribed period on 30th September 1997. The aims, content and procedure proposals for the strategy of lifelong learning are presented more closely in the following section.

The starting point of the lifelong learning strategy lies in the profound social and economic changes of the industrialised societies. The rapid change of society and working life, as well as high structural unemployment, give rise to inequality and social exclusion. The labour force seems to be divided into a permanent labour force, a short-time labour force, small entrepreneurs or self-supporters and those excluded from the labour market and living in the social economy. In the future the division of population between those who are successful and those who are socially excluded may sharpen.

In this changing environment many kinds of skills are needed, such as science and technology, professional qualifications, initiative and problem-solving skills, humanism, creativity and aestheticism, co-operation and teamwork capabilities, communication-, language- and interaction skills as well as the ability to learn continuously. Developing and sustaining these skills requires that society invest in intellectual and social capital, encourage the acquiring of new knowledge, bring education and working life closer to each other and prevent social exclusion

Changes in society bring about an extensive and continuous need for education which can be sufficiently answered only by promoting learning in all spheres of life. Lately the discussions on lifelong learning have concentrated on the need for economic development. Thus learning that improves vocational skills has been in a central position in the strategy of lifelong learning. It is not, however, the only substantive aim of the strategy. It is important that a varied range of learning opportunities aiming at individual objectives is available. This has a clear connection with the functioning of democracy and social cohesion, which in turn are prerequisites for the favourable economic development of the pluralistic society. Humanistic educational thought has traditionally emphasised the inherent value of learning, development of personality and increase in social consciousness. Lately the discussion has focused on social capital - the ability to co-operate and interact, the mutual trust as well as emotional intelligence needed in social relations. All these objectives have been included in the national strategy on lifelong learning. Thus lifelong learning is aiming at supporting personality development, strengthening democratic values, sustaining functioning communities and social cohesion and promoting innovations, productivity and national competitiveness.

In order to attain these objectives, the Committee for Lifelong Learning proposes the following reforms:

- to strengthen the learning basis of citizens
- to extend the variety of learning opportunities
- to accredit acquired skills
- to create learning paths
- to bring teachers' and educators' knowledge up to date
- to move on to a comprehensive policy on lifelong learning

In order sufficiently to prepare and adjust themselves to the changes that take place in working life and society, people must have access to a wide range of learning opportunities. According to the Committee, increasing learning opportunities has the following requirements:

- to extend learning opportunities along with working
- to elaborate non-governmental organisation activity as learning opportunities
- to use information and communication technology as a new kind of learning environment
- to co-ordinate more than before the change in the vocational structure and balance in our market by vocational adult training subsidised by the state.

Expansion and diversification of learning needs and opportunities will in the future increase the need for information, counselling and guidance. Making individual learning programmes will require effective and wide-ranging services that take into account changing conditions. Thus the Committee proposes that the development policy on learning will focus in the next few years on the elaboration of information-, counselling- and guidance services. A joint co-operation body consisting of the representatives of all parties involved will be responsible for co-ordination and co-operation. The elaboration of a joint service system is planned as an urgent co-operative project.

Proposals concerning the public acknowledgement and transferability of learned skills are based on other learning environments than on the earlier stronger position of the educational institutions. So as to make use of skills acquired in all learning environments, as in connection, for example, with job- or education-seeking or career development, there must be a general system where the citizens can prove their skills and obtain an official certificate. A procedure of this kind is already applied in certain professions in which the vocational examinations are based on skill tests. Acknowledgement and transferability can also be promoted by a so-called skill certificate that includes notes of the verified skills. Furthermore, it is proposed that free-form certificates, work examples, and other equivalent skill verifications are compiled in a portfolio which is elaborated as a way to identify the skills learned and thus support the formulation of a personal learning programme. The implementation of a lifelong learning strategy sets new requirements for educational institutions, working places and non-governmental organisations. Responding to them requires changes in organisations' procedures. It also requires, with the help of further education, the elaboration of the vocational skills of the teachers, guides and other educators who are also part of the process of change. The proposals to move on towards a comprehensive and developing policy on lifelong learning are based on a need for co-ordination caused by the diversifying learning environments as well as the diversity of public authorities and interest groups. According to the Committee, different administrative branches and interest groups, who have an influence on learning, must together formulate and implement a comprehensive policy on learning. This requires the organising of large-scale co-operative bodies on a national as well as regional and local levels.

In summary, in Finland the direction has been for many decades towards lifelong learning. The basic educational system of children and young people from pre-education to university studies is wide. A diversified education that is subsidised by public finance is available for the adult population. Non-governmental organisations offer different kinds of learning opportunities for their members and supports. The Broadcasting Company, other mass media and the Internet offer opportunities for self-education. Employees can improve their own skills along with working. Furthermore, organisers in the field of commercial education are diversifying their educational programmes.

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THE TAKE-UP OF LIFELONG LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES BY MEMBERS OF GROUPS AT RISK OF SOCIAL EXCLUSION

Lifelong learning opportunities are in principle unlimited because lifelong learning includes all learning whether it happens at school, in training institutions, at the workplace, through mass media or in other informal situations. Although study would be limited to only formal and non-formal education and learning in these forms respectively, there are some problems in finding statistics.

According to an adult education survey (1990) conducted by Statistics Finland participation in adult education increased between 1980 and 1990 in all demographic groups (in age groups between 18 and 73 years). This is explained by improved access to education, i.e. the expansion of vocational adult education and particularly staff training. Participation increases with the level of basic education and position in working life. Women took a somewhat more active part in adult education than men; participation among women stood at 47 per cent compared to 41 per cent among men.

The survey indicates that the most common form of adult education is training provided by the employer at the workplace or at an in-service training unit. Over half of all wage earners who had taken part in adult education in 1990 had been in this type of training. Participation increases with level of basic education. Men took a somewhat more active part in training organised by the employer. Compared with the situation in 1980, the level of participation among wage-earning men had declined, while the figures for women increased. The most active participants were wage earners in the age group 45-54 years.

Adult education centres are also popular forms of adult education. One-third of people taking part in adult education take part in courses arranged by adult education centres. Statistics on the number of students attending courses at adult education centres indicate a slight increase on the numbers for 1980. Three-quarters of the students were women in 1990. On average the people who go to adult education centres are older than learners at other institutions. In distinction to other forms of training, participation in courses offered by adult education centres was higher among people with a low level of education.

Various organisations and associations provided training and education to roughly one-fifth of the people taking part in adult education in 1990. The most active participants in training were in the age group 45-54 years. Participation increased linearly with level of education and socio-economic status. 15 per cent of the population aged 18-73 years who took part in adult education in 1990 studied at vocational or professional education institutions. Levels of participation were highest in the age group 30-34 years. The basic education of participants were more often an upper secondary level of education. Approximately five per cent of those taking part in adult education in 1990 attended courses offered by universities or university-level institutes. Participants in other adult education offered by institutes accounted for less than ten per cent. Participants in all other adult education outside the formal education system accounted for one quarter.

The adult education survey in 1990 was the second nation-wide survey on adult education conducted by Statistics Finland. The first one was carried out in 1980, and in 1995 information for the newest survey was gathered through computer-assisted interviews. It is possible to classify participants by sex, age, basic education and socio-economic status. The information of the survey on adult education is not, however, reported according to disability, nationality, language, employment status or other factors which may affect disadvantage in the labour market. Participants cannot therefore be classified into persons who are at risk of social exclusion and to others who are not. It would be interesting to know if there are the same kinds of problem in other partner countries, too, and if there are some ways to solve this problem.

It is possible, however, to find statistics of the take-up of labour market training by certain unemployed groups, for example the disabled persons and immigrants.

Source

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CASE STUDIES

Case study no. 37

Laptuote-säätiö / *Laptuote Foundation*

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Philosophy

"Integration into working life is a rehabilitative process."

History, context and general structure

The Foundation Promoting Employment of the Disabled in Finland (Vates) and The Social Insurance Institution (SII) started in 1994 an experimental project for the development of work training for mental rehabilitants. The project aims at finding alternative operational methods in traditional sheltered work in order to prevent more effectively the exclusion from the labour market of psychiatric rehabilitants. Two sheltered workshops were selected for the project: one in the capital and the other, Laptuote, in Lappeenranta, Eastern Finland. Laptuote is a work- and activity centre sustained by a foundation. The founder members of the foundation are Lappeenranta Town and five regional organisations for the disabled. Fields of activity cover vocational rehabilitation and training, marketing, product development as well as work and service activities.

The project is financed by SII. For Laptuote, the financing has increased yearly in accordance with the increasing number of clients: in 1996 it was approx. 1 million Finnish marks. The premises of Laptuote are newly renovated and have been expanded to be more suitable for the project. The project has a local follow-up group represented by the sheltered work shop, the social and health care department, the mental health department, SII, the employment office and the occupational health service.

The project staff, mainly on fixed-term contracts, consists of, among others, a rehabilitation psychologist, an educational planning co-ordinator, counsellors working at the work units, a job searcher and a trainer. Their work is distributed flexibly among different projects of the foundation; the target groups of the projects are psychiatric rehabilitants, disabled people, Ingrian returning emigrants and young people in danger of social exclusion. The basic requirements for the job are vocational qualifications and counselling skills as well as the ability to work in teams and to get along with different kinds of people. The ability to approve of difference is emphasised. Employees can maintain and improve their vocational skills with staff training. Working capability is taken care of in staff meetings where work problems are discussed. Problem situations are also handled in small groups with the guidance of a specialist as well as in weekly meetings.

Functions, target groups and content

The target group of the project consists of the psychiatric rehabilitants who receive rehabilitation aid or disability pension and are motivated to return to working life. The aim is to promote the rehabilitation and employment of the clients. The centre provides the clients with a safe environment and support network for the practising of required skills and learning of working culture.

Since rehabilitation through doing is important, the weekly programme of the clients contains guided work practice in the work unit five days a week and 4-6 hours a day. Clients' wishes are taken into account in the placement to the units. Laptuote clients can choose between textile, woodwork and restoration, laundry, kitchen, engraving and car fixing units. Furthermore, they can take part in producing framing, transportation, renovation and cleaning services. Products and services are bought by communities and private persons alike.

Besides work training the rehabilitation programme includes individual and group guidance, recreation and visits to work places and educational institutions. Clients regularly visit the psychologist for individual guidance. Questions on clients' feelings in work and in free time, how to get over difficulties and strengthen self-confidence are handled in the sessions. A central aim is to clarify vocational and work-related plans. It is important to explore the strengths and resources of the client as well as to support independent coping. Holistic guidance includes counselling in psycho-social problems as well as information of training and working opportunities.

There are weekly group sessions guided by the psychologist where different questions of life management are handled together. The clients also learn IT-skills in group sessions. Events outside the work training environment have proved to be rewarding. Group and recreational activities motivate the rehabilitants, raise the spirit, improve interaction and social skills and promote commitment to the project.

At the end of the rehabilitation period a written evaluation is made, containing the counsellor's evaluation on the working capacity of the client, the client's self-estimation and further plans. If the rehabilitation has progressed adequately along with increased strength and self-confidence, the client may move on to the Puzzle-project. This enables the client to take part in practical training outside the work centre, which is a step forward to the open labour market. The contracts are made for 1-3 months but it is possible to have a series of such contracts. The Puzzle also includes individual and group guidance as well as recreational activity. In addition, personal support activity has been launched. The project is financed by the ESF, SII and the Ministry of Labour. The clients of Laptuote can also participate in a seven-month highly practical vocational training.

The work trainer, job searcher and the whole staff support the clients during their work placement. Working together, the work trainer and the job searcher carry out a number of tasks: surveys of the labour market, making contacts with enterprises, preparing work analysis and finding training places as well as preparing trainees for their tasks. The activity is funded by a grant from the Finnish Slot Machine Association. It has been surprisingly easy to find training positions, for employers have been positive about the issue. However, it has proved to be more difficult to arrange jobs for the rehabilitants. One aim of the practical training is to lower the employment threshold.

During the four years 47 persons have participated in the work training project, ten rehabilitants at a time. Men and women have been equally represented. The age distribution of the participants has been 18-55 years, the average age being 33 years.

Two thirds of the participants are without or have unfinished vocational education. Nearly all had gained earlier work experience.

Access

When a rehabilitant who is a client of some agency or service which is collaborating with the Laptuote becomes interested in the work training project, a visit to a work centre is arranged. The rehabilitant can come alone or with a contact person who often is a personal aid. The rehabilitation psychologist shows clients the work centre and tells them about the functioning and the aims of the project. After the visit the rehabilitants can consider in peace and quiet if they wish to go along to the activity: sometimes it takes six months or even a year to make a decision. In order to get access to work training clients must submit a rehabilitation application and a medical certificate to the SII, according to which the decision on rehabilitation is made. The rehabilitation period is six months in the first instance but it is possible to lengthen it. In general, work training has taken approximately one year, the longest period being 18 months.

Work training is open to working-age mental rehabilitants who receive rehabilitation aid, pension or daily unemployment allowance. An additional requirement is to be a customer of the mental health office; this is to guarantee as many-sided a support as possible, for example, the services of a personal nurse. It is possible to continue in work training even if the connection to the mental health office for some reason breaks up. The worst hindrance for the training has been drinking problems as these evidently weaken commitment.

At the beginning an individual rehabilitation plan is drawn up together by the rehabilitant, the personal guide, the psychologist and the department coach of the work centre and, if required, other persons relevant for the rehabilitation of the client. The group meets regularly to follow up and support the implementation of the plan. The long term aim is always employment in the open labour market which can be achieved through work training, work experiments, subsidised work or other employment projects.

The service covers the Town of Lappeenranta and its neighbouring municipalities. Leaflets on the project have been delivered to local hospitals as well as employment, social and mental health offices. Office personnel have actively guided rehabilitants towards the project but the rehabilitants have also sought their way to the work training themselves as they have heard about it. There have been articles on the project in the newspapers as well. At the moment publicity is not emphasised for demand and supply are in balance. Local entrepreneurs and employers have been reached through seminars and other events.

During the work training and practical training the rehabilitants receive rehabilitation aid or disability pension from the SII. The clients have expressed their wish to earn payment from the work since rehabilitants with small incomes are often compelled to apply for subsistence benefit from the social office. Subsidised meals at half the normal price help the situation and in addition, the SII pays the travelling expenses exceeding a certain amount.

There are some job announcements on the noticeboard and computers available for making job applications. Home visits are possible but there has been little need for them. In order to take care of the clients the psychologist has to keep in contact with different agencies, yet not forgetting the importance of the client's independence. Generally, the psychologist and the client work out together how the client could independently take care of daily matters.

When the client starts practical training outside the rehabilitation centre the work trainer, acting as a support person, helps him/her with the start of the work. The length of the practical training is approx. 4-5 hours per day. Usually the employer at first trains the job trainer into the methods of working who in turn coaches the trainee for the work. This is to minimise trouble for the employer and it has partly enhanced co-operation with employers. Actual learning of the tasks often happens quickly. As it is important to get used to workmates, the trainer gives the client an example how to act in a work community. The trainer makes check-ups in the workplace to see how the trainee is doing. The rehabilitation psychologist and the trainer estimate the client's capability to manage at work and the possible need of support.

It has been under consideration whether the rehabilitants could continue receiving guidance after obtaining a job. This so-called accompanying phase, during which the amount of guidance gradually diminishes, has been found necessary.

"I heard about Laptuote when I was in a psychiatric day ward. I visited the place together with a ward worker in spring and in autumn I started at Laptuote. The best thing is that I have been given the opportunity to try out different tasks. The length of the working day has been appropriate and I have got advice and support in coping at work. I have become acquainted with new people and learned to be more social. I have gained work experience in different fields and thus know better what kind of work is interesting, what I want to do in the future, how much I am able to do etc. I find the activities in Laptuote multifarious. Every rehabilitant is treated individually" (woman, 23).

"I received information on Laptuote from my nurse and on Puzzle from the rehabilitation psychologist. I was interested in work practice in the open labour market so I applied for rehabilitation in the SII and got in. The best thing is the discussion groups and the opportunity to meet new people, discussions with rehabilitation psychologist and the practice outside. It has provided an opportunity to try coping with working life and to find out about my own working capability and managing. The Project has offered meaningful activities, I have gained the courage to meet different kinds of people and learned to stand up for myself better" (man, 35).

"I started with the activities after visiting Laptuote from the psychiatric clinic. Through the project I have returned to working life - I have even got a job outside the foundation. I have gained more self-confidence to cope in my life. I think that Laptuote activities help rehabilitants to get hold of life" (woman, 27).

Networking

The Laptuote work and activity centre has been networking with the organisations relevant to the development of rehabilitation and to the rehabilitants. Co-operation has enabled negotiation on several issues problematic for the rehabilitants and has also publicised the activity of the centre. Collaborating partners include social and health care department, mental health department, the SII, employment office and occupational health care. Co-operation also takes place with school departments, vocational training centres, the AMK-institute and training centres as well as with other work centres across the country. The national follow-up group of the project consists of the representatives of the work centres, the central, regional and local administration of the SII, the labour administration, Vates and the National Association for Mental Health. They follow up the progress of the work training and discuss the possible developmental needs of the project.

The job searcher and the work trainer create and maintain contacts with local entrepreneurs and other employers. They are members of the FINSE (Finnish Network of Supported Employment) which promotes the employment of people with disabilities in the open labour market with the help of subsidised employment. FINSE, in turn, is a member of the EUSE (European Union of Supported Employment).

The Puzzle-project is part of the ECHO network where information on national and European project practices, experiences and results is exchanged in order to prevent the social exclusion from working life of people with mental and psychosocial problems. The international dimension also covers European-wide co-operation in marketing. A non-profit marketing company which takes part in the international ARTO network has been founded alongside the foundation. The network promotes the international marketing of the work centre products.

Outcomes and assessment

Feedback on the work training is received through personal discussions with the clients and questionnaires have also been used. Many clients have found improvement in their work capacity as well as a general increase in their control over their own lives. Getting up to a daily routine and a more meaningful life have been found important factors; there is a reason to wake up in the morning. Other positive results are the diminishing of shyness and finding out new patterns of action in solving problematic situations. Job experience, membership of a work community and a sense of being useful have been significant outcomes for the rehabilitants as well.

One of the strengths of the work centre has been the productive work units where a safe and supportive atmosphere as well as continuous guidance are available. At the units the clients can develop their working skills according to their own strengths without fear of being labelled. Since the work is productive the clients get a sense of doing something useful; this has a positive effect on their self-confidence and their respect for their own work. During the project it has become evident that those with previous work experience have the best opportunities to manage in work training. It is important for those with little or no previous work experience to get longer contracts since the development of working skills is a slow process through personal experience.

An additional strength of the project can be found in the flexible co-operation between those organisations where the rehabilitants are clients. Client-oriented support groups have helped the clients to manage and strengthen their belief in their own possibilities in working life. Co-operation has provided concrete information on the requirements of working life, including a more realistic view of the employment possibilities of the client. Breaking with conventions has also taken place in the internal activities of Laptuote-foundation for there is a great amount of synergy from different projects.

The progress of the clients is followed up in client-oriented support groups and the general situation in local and national follow-up groups. Data is not yet collected systematically but some information is already available. 14 of the 47 rehabilitants who started the work training have moved on to the Puzzle-project after the first stage. Two have been employed in the open labour market, three have started training and two participate in productive sheltered work. One client is on work try-out. Four rehabilitants have registered themselves as unemployed job seekers. In five cases the pension continues as before. Amount of interruptions is 12; these are mainly due to drinking problems and serious illness.

Laptuote is an example of how the activities of the work centres have been actively developed in a rehabilitative and educational direction. New methods offering more individual and flexible solutions in order to promote rehabilitants' gradual proceeding into employment have been adopted. Since the experiences of the work training project have been positive it was confirmed as a permanent form of action from the beginning of 1998 on. The SII will continue financing the project.

Case study no 38

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Philosophy

"Belief in the potential capabilities of every rehabilitant."

History, context and general structure

Clubhouse Näsinkulma is the first Fountain House clubhouse in Finland. The activity was started in Tampere in October 1995 by Sopimusvuori reg. It replaced a closed daycare home and thus expresses change in the general service structure. So as to offer a new service alternative one of the daycare homes sustained by the Sopimusvuori reg. was transformed into a clubhouse on the Fountain House model. The Fountain House activity was started in New York in 1948.

Sopimusvuori reg. has been involved in psychosocial rehabilitation in the Tampere region since the 1970s. The purpose is to work with persons with mental problems in non-institutional care in order to improve their quality of life. The focus in all rehabilitation is to function as a therapeutic community. Familiarity with community-based activities offered a groundwork for the implementation of the clubhouse activity.

According to the study made by the Central Association for Mental Health, the patients of non-institutional care consider loneliness, poverty, shame and lack of meaningful activities as the biggest problems in their lives. Important problems are also deficiency in social capabilities which poses a barrier to employment in the open labour market and for the utilisation of one's abilities. Shortcomings in social capabilities increase loneliness and isolation, in turn weakening social skills. Club members are offered meaningful activities in a supportive community which promotes their self-esteem and social readiness.

Sopimusvuori reg. provides for the financial matters of the clubhouse. At the moment the project grant from the Finnish Slot Machine Association covers over half of the financing. This grant, however, will end after 1998. Another important source of funding is remuneration for the services paid by the municipalities. The share of the municipalities for one day is 53 Finmarks. As the foundation takes care of the financing, the clubhouse answers for its activities independently. The club members and the personnel take equal part in decision-making, planning and implementation of the activity as well as in the assessment of the results. The club meeting takes place once a week.

The Näsinkulma clubhouse is located in the centre of Tampere in a beautiful wooden house owned by the Sopimusvuori Foundation. The house is over 100 years old but is completely renovated and provides pleasant facilities for the activities.

The clubhouse has four full-time employees: a work guide, an occupational therapist, a social counsellor and an IT technician, three of whom were also permanent staff of Sopimusvuori reg. When recruiting new employees the whole club takes part in the selection process. As a basic requirement experience in social and health care is appreciated; however, suitability in working in a community such as the clubhouse is the most decisive factor. Every year several social and health care students become aquatinted with the activity through a training period in the club.

There is an annual appropriation for training intended for the club members and personnel. Together they participate in basic and continuing training in Fountain House activities; training is provided in a study centre in Malmö, Sweden. Training has enabled the members and the personnel to internalise the idea of the clubhouse and provided them with practical advice in starting and developing the activities. At the beginning the personnel were offered induction training which they, however, found incompatible with the principles of the club.

Functions, target groups and content

The Näsinkulma clubhouse is committed to follow the international Fountain House model and its aims. The starting point is meaningful daily activity based on the needs, resources and strengths of the clients. Working and participation in the daily tasks of the club have a central role to play. Daily tasks are assigned twice a day and everyone is allowed to choose their tasks.

The Näsinkulma clubhouse consists of three units: the kitchen and office units and the transitional employment unit. The kitchen unit takes care of the cooking and maintains a reasonably priced canteen for the club members. They are responsible for their own planning, shopping, laundering and cleaning. The office unit is responsible for the financial matters of the club and for information and contacts. It also participates in research, statistical and publication work. Modern office facilities are used.

The club idea includes transitional employment in the open labour market. It provides the clients with an opportunity to practise work without losing pension or other benefits. Members of the unit make contacts with employers in order to find suitable jobs; the worker is selected by the club community. The model was developed as easy and secure for both the employers and the clients. When an employer has made a contract with the association to buy a certain contribution, one of the personnel will learn the work first and then coach a client for it. The Association pays the wage. Another club member is also coached for the work so that the work will be done even if the original worker becomes ill or tired. Half-day work enables the client to use the club as a base. The personnel make weekly visits to the workplace. On average the work period lasts five months so that the clients get a picture of their capabilities for managing in working life.

During the transitional employment there is a so called abc-group led by an occupational therapist to discuss with the clients the requirements and rules of working life. The issues also come up in information events. Since training is an important factor in promoting employment, the club encourages the members to gain adequate training or to finish interrupted studies. The members are provided with help in making contacts with educational institutions and finding out appropriate training as well as visiting them. Recreational activity is also planned jointly. As in working life the activity is organised outside club hours and so the club is open on Sunday afternoons. The members have been to theatres, concerts and art exhibitions; they have gone for walks together; and recreational trips are arranged a few times a year.

The Fountain House club members have four basic rights, also cherished in Näsinkulma. These are: "the right for: a place to come; for meaningful work; for meaningful human relationships; and to return to the clubhouse".

Access

The clubhouse is aimed at working-age rehabilitants with psychosocial problems. Many members are in a care relation to the healthcare services which, however, is not a prerequisite for participation in the club activities. Members come from Tampere or the neighbouring municipalities which have bought services from the association. In practice the membership is also limited by the amount of funded rehabilitation places.

At the moment the clubhouse has over 100 members, 60 per cent of whom are women. The age distribution is very equal. Membership of the clubhouse is voluntary although many members are guided to the club by some agency. First contact is usually made by phone. Candidates for membership visit the clubhouse alone or together with an agency representative. If interested in the activity the rehabilitant is recommended to follow the working of each unit for a few days before making a final decision. Thus both the rehabilitant and the house will find out rehabilitants' capabilities to participate in club activities. There are health criteria for membership for the clubhouse is not suitable for all rehabilitants. As people with mental problems are more often than before guided to non-institutional care, it must be taken into account for which stage of the rehabilitation process the club activity is the most suitable method of guidance.

There are no time limits nor fees for membership. Every one is allowed to choose their own visiting times. The daily amount of visitors is approximately 22. The amount of active members who visit the clubhouse at least ten times a month is about the same. Some members have been clients since the beginning of the activity.

There have been several ways to inform people about the activity: leaflets have been distributed to the collaborating parties, Open Door sessions have been arranged and information given through the mass media. Näsinkulma Club publishes a club magazine four times a year which is sent to all members and partners. There is a home page on the Internet. Visitors, clients and personnel from mental health offices, day hospitals and psychiatric hospitals as well as representatives of the social and health care department and decision-makers of the city have been invited to the club. All special employment officials of Tampere region have visited the club. Activities and operation are presented openly and requests for visits are taken positively: in 1997 there were over 500 visitors to the clubhouse from all over the country.

Publicity was emphasised from the beginning. Later marketing has been less active for as people hear about the club from other people they come for a visit. It is, however, possible that more people would participate if more information on the clubhouse was circulated.

One of the main ideas behind the club activity is the outreach activity which includes contacting such members who have not been heard from for some time. Means of outreach are phone calls, postal contacts and home visits. The aim is to keep in touch with all members, to support them to continue participating and in that way to take care of their rehabilitation. Both the members and the personnel keep up the contacts.

Networking

Näsinkulma clubhouse is in active contact with other clubhouses in Finland and abroad. It is a member of a Finnish clubhouse network as well as of the international organisation of the Fountain House clubs, the International Centre for Clubhouse Development (ICCD).

> I found about the clubhouse "from a doctor in hospital. The best thing in the activity is that the members and the staff are equal. One stays better in action. One has a feeling of being equal with healthy people. My self-esteem has improved. I find the club activity a good form of rehabilitation; it is easy to return here" (woman, 49).
>
> "I got information from the mental health centre and I visited the place with a psychologist. I find the best thing is the co-operation with other people, that I have more courage and that I have something to do" (woman, 38).
>
> "I know the premises from the time of day-care home. When it was turned into a clubhouse, I was given an opportunity to go on as a club member. I lived in a small home of the Sopimusvuori and so I knew about it. Here is activity and one can do anything, to improve one's skills. A good thing has been that I have got a transitional job and I like it very much there. The membership has helped me for I can visit the club whenever I feel like it" (man, 64).
>
> The best thing is "that there is a place where to come and where to be approved of. I have occasionally gone through old memories and despite misunderstandings I am recovering" (woman, 30).

Local collaboration is wide-ranging: besides administration, such as health care stations, hospitals, mental health offices, the SII, tax office, employment office and social office, there is co-operation with adult education institutions, social and health care schools and patients' and relatives' associations. Contacts are also maintained with employers and other interest groups.

Outcomes and assessment

The programme of transitional employment enables members to try working life. Finding the first job was a lengthy process as the issue was new for employers and prejudices were strong. After making approaches to approximately 50 private employers without any result the personnel started negotiations with the public sector. The first transitional job, for an office assistant, was found in the parish. Later the city park department and social department as well as a private enterprise came along. At the moment a fifth rehabilitant is participating in transitional employment. So far the present transitional jobs have adequately answered to the interest and readiness of the clients to try transitional employment.

The club also supports the members to seek independently their way back to working life. There are computers in use and training in different kinds of programmes has been given by the IT-trainer. *Työmarkkinat* -newspaper which contains job and training announcements as well as the biggest local newspaper are subscribed to by the club.

One way of support is to assist the clients with societal services. These include housing issues and matters of interest such as income; members are also provided with help in finding appropriate health care and mental health services. About 40 per cent of the club members are using some service of the supported housing by Sopimusvuori. Dining is arranged at cost price through the canteen of the kitchen unit.

Although support from equals is given the highest priority, it is possible to get individual guidance from the personnel. The right to return to the clubhouse allows the members to use club services even after starting waged work.

The aim of the club's work is to help members to restore their self-esteem and self-confidence and to find a meaning to life. At the clubhouse clients have an opportunity to try and to estimate their own abilities and skills without the necessity of succeeding. The activities prepare the clients for working life although it does not train them for any particular job. The work-orientated daily programme unites the members and the personnel to look after the clubhouse together. Everyone takes responsibility for themselves, for their own doings and, at the same time, for the clubhouse activity. All members take part in sustaining the clubhouse in their own way.

The strength of the clubhouse activity is that the model has been developed to support non-institutional care on the bases of the clients and their needs. Doing things together and the support of the community are central in the model. The activity is holistic and includes responsibility for other members; the latter is implemented in the outreach activity which shows the members that they are cared about and their well-being matters.

Another innovative feature in the field of rehabilitation is the so-called transitional employment. A prerequisite for that has been the compatibility with social security which was also required if the model was to be applied in a more extensive way.

Statistics on the employment and training of the members are compiled in the clubhouse. By the end of 1997 nine clients had started studying, some of whom continued as club members. Six members had been employed in the open labour market and four had tried transitional employment. Thus it can be concluded that activation has occurred for one third of the members. All members do not necessarily aim at studying or employment in the near future which is acceptable as well.

The more different kinds of rehabilitation services there are, the more options the rehabilitants have. In the clubhouse the direction is outward to so-called normal life. Many times clients have rehabilitated well and that is why it is time to do something else. In this sense Näsinkulma has been a pioneer and a model for others interested in the model.

Case study no. 39

Naisten työllistymisprojekti/*Employment Project for Women*

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Philosophy

> " Every person holds the key to their own life and its problems; they can be solved with sufficient knowledge and support."

History, context and general structure

The Employment Project for Women set up by the Equal Opportunities and Personnel Administration of the City of Espoo was launched in 1994. The project was influenced by the need to promote equality in working life. During the recession the amount of job vacancies decreased substantially as a result of labour force reductions in traditional female sectors, such as banking and the public sector, with a subsequent increase in female unemployment. It also became evident that women's opportunities to obtain work declined rapidly the older they became. As a pioneer of equality work the City of Espoo wanted to call attention to the issue by starting a project especially for women.

In 1995 the Women's Employment Project was attached as an independent part to a three-year Employment Path Project started at that time in the metropolitan area. The Employment Path Project provides flexible services for the long-term unemployed of the area. In addition to actual employment measures, the project offers advice and social services, directs people to training and arranges courses. The aim is to help as many people as possible to return to working life. The Employment Path Project is conducted by the cities of Helsinki, Espoo and Vantaa together with the Labour District of Uusimaa. The project is financed with the support of the ESF, the labour administration and the above-mentioned cities. Funding is granted for three years and the total project budget in 1996 was over one million marks. The City of Espoo offers its unused premises free of charge for the activity for the unemployed. These premises have been very suitable for the women's project too.

Two employees hired for fixed terms are responsible for the organisation and implementation of the project activity. Teamwork skills and the ability to communicate with different kinds of people are required. There has been little staff training; however, they have been supported through the possibility to participate in group work guidance.

Functions, target groups and content

The objective of the women's project is to integrate unemployed women into the labour market through waged work, co-operative work or entrepreneurship. Forms of action include career path groups, co-operative courses, short courses, thematic events and, most recently, entrepreneurship path groups. These are group processes and include information courses of short duration, tailor-made for the clients and helping them to move on. Strongly profession-related networking has been supported in the project; as a result a handicraft project and two caring-sector co-operatives have been started.

The target group of the project is unemployed women residing in Espoo. The minimum age is 25 years for there is a separate employment project for younger people in the city. The majority of the participants are of middle-age, 35-55 year old women. Many participants have been unemployed for a very long time. One special group is housewives returning to working life. Roughly 20 per cent of all participants have an academic qualification; on the other hand about 25 per cent have no vocational qualification whatsoever but have, however, a long experience of working life. Several participants are changing their careers.

The path towards employment usually starts with career planning groups of eight participants. The group, led by the guidance worker, meets ten times during three weeks, working according to a plan made in advance. The work includes finding the strengths and areas of development, improving job-seeking skills, making contact networks and information on labour markets and educational alternatives. Since prolonged unemployment often weakens one's belief in one's own capabilities and opportunities, the raising of self-esteem and motivation as well as encouragement are essential parts of the programme.

Every participant herself prepares an employment plan with a time-schedule as well as a back-up plan. The components of the employment path are, for example, vocational or further training, work practice, co-operatives, subsidised work, intensified job seeking or entrepreneurship course.

Employment is promoted in so-called entrepreneurship path groups as well as through training from the viewpoint of joint entrepreneurship. Four persons at a time take part in the path group and it lasts about 15 hours. Training is obtained from a consultant in the field who guides the participants in researching their intended product as well as in refinement of the business idea.

The idea of the handicraft project was born in the career path group and it was developed in the co-operative course until approved as a two-year project of the Espoo City Education and Culture Department. The aim is to make handicrafts and craftsmanship a more visible part of economic life as well as to support and encourage craftsmen and women to find different forms of action in their aspirations for lucrative living. More than one hundred craftsmen, entrepreneurs and teachers have joined the network. There are both unemployed and working people, and a few pensioners. Their common challenge is to find marketing channels for the products; related sales and presentation events as well as exhibitions and fairs have been arranged. Courses for the network participants have been organised in co-operation with an adult education centre. In addition, craft teachers and counsellors involved in the project have conducted craft workshops for children.

Co-operation with the labour administration has enabled tailor-made training for special groups:, for example, further training for professionals in the graphics sector as well as apprenticeship training for the work of a school secretary. Co-operation also includes an information service, for the local employment office keeps the project co-ordinator informed of such vacancies which are financially subsidised by the City of Espoo. The subsidy is granted to those private employers who employ a long-term unemployed person. There is also a small sum of money available for the project which can be used to support individual training, such as certificated computer courses. This has promoted employment for some ten persons per year.

Access

All women who are unemployed or under the threat of unemployment and residing in Espoo may participate in the Women's Employment Project. Clients come to career groups on their own initiative, which is made as easy as possible: no filling of application forms is required. Contact information can be given by phone.

Many clients have found out about the project through employment offices either through employment officers or notice boards. In addition there is a regular advertisement in the city's bulletin delivered monthly to all households. Every now and then there are paid advertisements in the local free distribution paper. Information is also delivered by word of mouth. Since the career path groups have been full there has not been any perceived need to increase publicity. On the other hand new groups have been started so often that there has been no need to discard participants either. The project has been introduced to decision-makers such as municipal councillors and the women's network of parliament.

> "I saw an advertisement on the women's employment project in a local newspaper. I called and asked for further information in case the activities would suit me. Then I was invited to the group. The best thing was the chance to meet other unemployed women and to realise that I am not alone in these matters. I could exchange ideas with other people and hear their opinions. The project helped me get out of the house and clarified my thoughts. My self-esteem rose. It is now easier for me to write job applications. I was encouraged to start on further training and I got material support for it. I feel much more positive than I did before. Every one was treated individually. I hope that the activities will continue for I think it is a good way to prevent women's exclusion" (woman, 38).
>
> "I read about the project participants in the city information paper and regional free newspaper and I was also advised to make contact with the leader of the women's career path group, and it opened me completely new visions in planning the future. The project has offered an opportunity to specialise in interesting groups. From the first day on I have felt that I have come to the right place; I am supported and I get positive feedback, I have ideas, I make new plans, I am active and more determined than before. I have found a profession: entrepreneur. That is what I only used to dream about. The group size is small enough so that everyone has had the chance to work out her own situation and plans. We have been handling very important issues and thought them through rather well. I hope that all women at home and women who are bored with their work can participate in this kind of course and thus get new power and meaning in their lives" (woman, 51).
>
> "I found out about the women's career paths in a free newspaper. The group increased my self-esteem to seek a job and helped me in filling up the applications. I could also see that I am not alone with my problems. In a group we support each other and find out our best sides and analyse the bad sides by turning them into positive ones. The project helped me to get an apprenticeship. It could not have been better. In the project it became clear that it is worth going along instead of thinking alone. I got a new belief in life" (woman, 54).

Guided courses are of finite duration but there are no time limits for participation in co-operatives, handicraft projects and the project network. There are some 250 persons on the network's circular letter list at the moment. Project services are free of charge and the participants are entitled to normal unemployment benefit during the project. It has been agreed with the city daycare sector that the unemployed may bring their children to the daycare centre during the group work and courses, provided that there are free places available.

Individual guidance is provided if needed. However, due to scarcity of resources and the nature of group activity, priority is given to group guidance; psychical resources are distributed when every participant brings her own experiences, knowledge and skills into the group. Confidentiality is secured by agreement at the first session that the matters will remain in the group only.

There are no office premises with a reception and information desk for the project. Previously there was a room equipped with a computer and a telephone for the clients at the city hall. The room had to be given up but the computer was transferred to the assembly hall where it is still available for job seeking.

Networking

The Employment project has close connections with the employment office, the apprenticeship office, vocational adult institutions and Espoo City Employment Path. There are also contacts with women's and entrepreneurs' organisations as well as the service network of the social sector where clients are guided if needed.

Outcomes and assessment

The participants are asked for written feedback at the end of group working. During the process other kinds of assessment are also requested. The participants appreciate group membership and the social contacts which partly substitute for the working community they are lacking. The opportunity to take part in a process where one can actually promote employment and get support has been found to be important. The participation of women only has also been seen positively. Mixed-sex groups are believed to change the working methods in a less open and comprehensive direction.

The strength of the services lies in the tailor-made, goal orientated and personal working in small groups. Although concentrating on vocational needs, the groups have provided the participants with many kinds of skills such as team work skills and strengthening of identity. Another advantage is that it offers an opportunity to network as well as to continue training: some participants have continued in a project framework to entrepreneurship path, co-operative path or training.

Problems have been found in the short term in the career- and entrepreneurship path groups for many would need a longer period of guidance. Previously open meetings for career group participants were arranged monthly as to follow up the implementation of their plans. Due to lack of resources meetings are no longer held nor is there any other kind of after-care for those who have not made progress in their employment plans. In addition, when training, work practice or supported work ends, many would be in need of guidance and support to strengthen their belief in their own capabilities and to activate jobseeking.

The total number of participants in career path groups in 1996-1997 was 281 and in entrepreneurship path groups 53. Follow-up has been carried out from the first career group onward. Five months after the group ends, an inquiry is sent to the participants. Roughly 30 per cent have been employed in the open labour market, 40 per cent have continued in training and 5-10 per cent are aiming at entrepreneurship. One-fifth of the women are continuing on the path through work practice, work try-out, subsidised work or some other individual solution.

Case study no. 40

Maahanmuuttajien työllisyys- ja koulutusprojekti/*Employment and Training Project for Immigrants*

Helsingin kaupungin opetusvirasto/ *Helsinki City Education Department*

Maahanmuuttajakoulutusyksikkö/ *The Immigrants' Training Unit*

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Philosophy

"Immigrants have to be supported to clarify and realise their vocational and educational objectives so that they have better opportunities to integrate themselves into Finnish society."

History, context and general structure

At the beginning of 1995 the Labour District of Uusimaa, in co-operation with Helsinki City Education Department, vocational adult training centres, upper secondary schools for adults and Helsinki University's centre for continuing education, started an employment and training project for immigrants. The project was considered necessary due to a substantial increase in the number of immigrants in Finland and especially in the capital area during the 1990s recession. In a weak general employment situation only a few immigrants have managed to get jobs. It was evident that, in order to cope in a new culture and working environment, immigrants need special guidance and support services as well as the development of vocational facilities.

The three-year project is funded by the ESF and the Labour District of Uusimaa. In addition, it is supported financially by the National Board of Education in the planning and implementing of occupational skill tests. There is a counselling group to support the planning and evaluation of the employment and training project, consisting of the representatives of educational institutions, labour administration, provincial administrative boards, municipalities and the National Board of Education.

The Employment and training project for immigrants consists of three components: initial evaluation; language and vocational training; and intensified employer services. Here the focus is in the first phase of the project, that is the initial evaluation. The International Unit of the Helsinki Employment Office and the Immigrants' Training Unit established in the Helsinki City Education Department are in charge of the initial evaluation of the immigrants' employment and training project. The latter employs a project co-ordinator, an employment and training counsellor and a secretary who also works as an interpreter for French and English. In addition, an interpreter for Russian works part-time in the project. Staff training on immigration questions has been organised for the whole staff as well as study tours to St. Petersburg and Ingria. Due to the nature of the funding allocation procedure, the staff is hired for fixed terms one year at the time. In 1996 the total costs of the initial evaluation were 1.2 million marks, which is about the same as in the previous year.

Functions, target group and content

The objective of the whole project is to increase immigrants' possibilities of gaining jobs, to find appropriate continuing education and to support business start-ups. The main thing is to offer immigrants an opportunity to integrate themselves into working life and hence into social contacts and independent living. A further objective of the project is to elaborate training methods for immigrants and to create a training and service model for immigrants in the metropolitan area which could serve the educational and labour administration in future.

The aim of the initial evaluation is to support immigrants in finding and implementing vocational and educational objectives as well as to encourage them to act independently in Finnish society. The initial evaluation course lasts three weeks and includes lectures on Finnish society, labour markets, jobseeking, entrepreneurship, vocational adult training opportunities, different forms of benefits and on adaptation to alien culture. During the course participants visit enterprises and educational institutions and hear about other immigrants' activities.

The initial evaluation aims to measure through vocational skill testing how immigrants' education and work experience gained in their home country meet the requirements set by Finland's education system and working life. Furthermore, the immigrants' knowledge of the Finnish language as well as their overall requirements for training and employment are clarified. At the end of the course an individual study and employment plan (HOPS) is prepared on the bases of the test results, together with the client. The project aims to create for 2,100 immigrants personal action plans for training and employment which are delivered to the employment office as the basis for further action. The plan helps the work of employment officers by providing more information on the skills and facilities of the immigrant jobseekers.

The main target group of the project are unemployed immigrants over 25 years old living in the metropolitan area. Selected participants are mostly returning emigrants and foreign citizens married to Finns. At different times 65-90 per cent of the participating immigrants are Ingrian people who have come from the former Soviet Union and are granted the status of returning emigrant (the Ingrian are the only eligible immigrants from the Soviet Union). However, by halfway through the project representatives of 87 different nationalities had taken part in the initial courses. Most of the participants are of working age and men have made up slightly over half the participants. Approximately half of the participants had lived in Finland for more than two years.

Access

The Employment and training project for immigrants covers the Labour District of Uusimaa and concentrates only on the metropolitan area. Since the initial evaluation courses are arranged as labour market training, the employment office selects the participants. During the first two years the practice was for labour administration officials to seek suitable immigrants among registered jobseekers and guide them to the initial evaluation course. At the beginning of 1997 this procedure was replaced by monthly announcements in the labour administration's *Työ ja koulutus* (Work and Education) newspaper. This procedure has been complemented by distributing project brochures to the employment offices and immigration centres.

Due to motivation problems admittance to the initial evaluation course was changed in spring 1996 so as to use the Finnish language test as a qualifier. Those who achieve a minimum level in the test may start the project with the actual initial evaluation course. This facilitates students' participation in the course and makes the planning more meaningful and realistic. Persons with inadequate knowledge of language are guided by the labour administration to Finnish language courses.

There are no economic obstacles to participation in the project for it is free of charge as is labour market training in general. During the course participants are entitled to normal financial study aid which is the amount of unemployment benefit as well as to a smaller maintenance allowance for travel costs.

The training premises of the initial courses are located far away from the city centre but within range of good public transport in an area where many immigrants live. The project has rented space for the activity from the Helsinki Institute of Social Welfare Studies. In an entrance area there is a receptionist to guide the visitors. She is an immigrant from Uruguay who has herself participated in the project and is also able to guide the visitors in different languages. Signs in Russian also help the participants to find their way around the building.

> "I heard about the project from the employment office. I filled up the application and got in. The project has helped me for now I have a plan for training and employment and I know what to do. I got information on where to continue my studies, how to write a job application and how to seek a job in general. I also liked the visits" (woman, 31).
>
> "I heard about the initiative course from the employment office. The best thing in the course has been short and clear lectures where a lot of useful information has been given to us. I have found out different kinds of opportunities of further training" (woman, 29).
>
> "I got a lot of information on training, Finnish working life and legislation. Now I know what to do when seeking a job. There was a friendly and relaxed atmosphere in the course. The organisers took good care of us, for instance they ensured that we received as much information as possible" (woman, 35).

Language problems during the initial evaluation course are worked out with the help of interpreters. The main language of the project is Finnish but the lectures are interpreted into Russian as well as in English and French, if required. The participants' knowledge of languages places them in unequal position with each other because appropriate interpretation cannot be arranged in all cases due to lack of resources. However, in the actual HOPS-interview interpreters in each interviewee's native language are used; the service, which is liable to charge, is provided partly by the Helsinki Region Community Interpreting Centre and partly by a private enterprise.

One advantage of the project is continuity as the individual employment paths do not remain as mere plans but lead to further activities. After the initial evaluation course the participants are guided according to their aims and needs to Finnish language courses, vocational education, subsidised work or practical training. Labour market training especially planned for the participants is also arranged. Vocational training in the metal, electric and building sectors as well as courses in commerce and administration, social care and hairdressing have been arranged.

Networking

The project is carried out in close co-operation with the Employment office and organisers of adult vocational training and general education. The creation of networks between authorities working with immigrants and training institutions is one of the aims that the project has successfully attained. During the initial evaluation courses contacts with SII, social welfare office and immigrants' organisations are also made. In the first phase of the project contacts with local employers take mostly place as study visits.

Outcomes and assessment

The objective of the project is to elaborate a training and guidance model for those adult immigrants living in the metropolitan area who are not refugees. (In Finland the reception of refugees is arranged in a very broad way by the state and municipalities.) So far it has been much more difficult for other immigrants to acquire guidance and adult vocational training.

The employment and training project for immigrants is ground-breaking in the sense that it systematically defines the vocational skills of the immigrants; how they meet the requirements of the Finnish working life; how their employment opportunities can be enhanced through education and social exclusion thus be prevented. Previously there was little information on the content of the vocational skills acquired abroad as well as the skills inherent in any particular vocational qualification. According to the project's interim report, about 10 per cent of those involved in the inquiry would have been directly ready for working life on the basis of their vocational and language skills. The others needed either language or vocational training or both.

The language test designed particularly for the project is used for evaluation of the immigrants' Finnish language skills. The test is adapted from the official language tests and it measures written skills and understanding of spoken Finnish. The standards were created by a working group of Finnish language teachers. At the initiative of the labour district a working group of Finnish language teachers has developed a uniform system of levels for the educational institutions arranging Finnish language courses for the immigrants. The system facilitates the guidance of immigrants towards proper language training.

Helsinki City Education Department's Immigration Unit holds a database which contains basic information on the participants collected since the beginning of the project, such as nationality, native language, length of time lived in Finland, knowledge of the Finnish language and possible vocational skill tests as well as to where the client has been guided after the initial course. Since, however, the Immigration Unit has no access to individual follow-up information, the database does not contain information on clients' employment or admission to education.

Information for the follow-up study is collected from the Employment office's database on jobseekers. The continuing education centre which is co-ordinating the whole project carried out an extensive follow-up survey in 1996. The target group of the survey were participants who had completed one or more phases of the project during the year 1995. According to the survey 12.5 per cent of the participants of the initial evaluation courses gained employment even though the courses do not actually aim at employment but only at preparing an employment plan. About 30 per cent of the participants were in training. The results of the follow-up survey indicate, however, that the paths aiming at employment are not as smooth and watertight as planned: most immigrants who took part in the initial evaluation had to wait for admission to the language or vocational course for six months or more.

During the initial evaluation course participants are encouraged to give feedback on the course's applicability to them, for instance, through an evaluation form at the end of the course. Many participants, however, leave the form empty. It has been discovered that especially Russians and Estonians are reluctant to give feedback even when it is given anonymously. One reason for this can be found in the cultural background since in the Soviet Union criticism of the authorities was not customary. Hence the preparation of the evaluation form is of paramount importance. Since the feedback of the course is given in Finnish the knowledge of language can be a limiting factor as well. At first the possibility of answering in one's own language was considered but it became clear that the project has no resources for translation.

Despite these difficulties, the participants according to the feedback received so far have found the initial evaluation course and its content useful. The vocational skill tests are particularly appreciated since they help to clarify skills in relation to the requirements of Finnish working life. For many participants the test has been their first opportunity to use their vocational skills in Finland. Current and wide-ranging information on Finnish society as well as on working life and educational opportunities were also considered useful, helping immigrants better to understand Finnish practices and to integrate themselves into the new culture. Training in jobseeking and making job applications and curriculum vitae are considered very important. For example, in the former Soviet Union employees were ordered into jobs and thus most immigrants from that region have not internalised the process of jobseeking nor the idea of self-marketing.

The number of participants in the courses had been 50-70 but it dropped to half of that after changing over to newspaper announcements.

The Employment office plays a central role in informing people about and guiding them to training. This dependency on the labour administration has been criticised since the Immigration Unit wished to have more influence on the selection of the participants. The unit possesses knowledge of the courses and their content as well as suitable persons for the courses. Furthermore, it was hoped that the employment office would return to the previous practice in which the participants of the project were actively sought out among jobseekers.

The duration of the initial evaluation course was considered too short by project employees. A longer period would give more time for individual participants and thus better further their objectives. Even so, the activating effect of the three week period was altogether astonishingly good.

The advantage of the project is the clarification of the immigrants' individual facilities and objectives as well as improving their vocational skills and general working facilities. The three-year employment and training project for immigrants ended after 1997 but will probably be continued in somewhat different form.

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Case study no. 41

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Philosophy

"Integration into foreign society is a multidimensional process which covers all spheres of life."

History, context and general structure

The Ingrian Centre is a holding organisation of the Ingrian associations in the metropolitan area and at the same time an activity centre for returning emigrants. It was established in autumn 1995 by the initiative of several Ingrian associations, including the Ingrian Cultural Society and Returning Emigrants reg. Due to a large number of Ingrian returning emigrants it was considered necessary to find a place where Ingrians could get advice and meet each other. There are about 15,000 Ingrian re-immigrants in Finland, over half of whom live in the capital area. The Ingrian Centre is a meeting place and information centre which also arranges courses, club activity and cultural events. In spring 1997 the centre moved further away from the city centre to its third premises.

The activity of the centre is financed by the Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Education, National Board of Education and Helsinki City. The Finnish Slot Machine Association has financed the immigrants' crisis service project. Financing has been slightly increasing during the last few years along with increasing activity. Funds are granted mostly for one year at a time and sometimes for even shorter periods. Hence, for example, the rent grant received from the social welfare board will suffice only for six months in the new larger premises. The activities of the Ingrian Centre are directed by the board on which are represented the chairmen of four Ingrian associations and two workers' co-operatives.

There are six employees in the Ingrian Centre hired for fixed terms: all employees except for the executive manager are either subsidised workers or trainees. Most of the workers are immigrants, including the executive manager who is a re-immigrant from Estonia. She also runs the guidance and crisis service. There are ten volunteers working in the service and four of them are also employed by the centre. The workers are returning emigrants and thus familiar with the experiences relating to immigration and prepared to handle clients' problems. At the same time the volunteers' own employment is enhanced by offering opportunities to gain experience in this kind of work. The contribution of voluntary work has been also used in language teaching and running a cafe. Repairs to the new premises were also made on a voluntary basis.

Staff training is arranged for the workers of the centre. The Executive manager, for example, has taken a course arranged by the Ministry of Labour on organising immigrant activity. The voluntary workers have taken part in a course on crisis services arranged by the Finnish Mental Health Association and the centre has organised continuing training for the course.

Functions, target group and content

The Ingrian Centre aims to facilitate Ingrian returning emigrants' adaptation to Finnish society, to prevent social problems leading to social exclusion and to guide returning emigrants to working life. Forms of action consist of guidance, training, clubs and social evenings.

Since the need for psychological support has become evident, the Ingrian Centre's guidance and crisis service helps the returning immigrants to improve their control over life. They try to inspire re-immigrants, who are often unemployed, lonely and poor, with confidence in the future and they give support with different kinds of social problems. On the other hand, the guidance element is mostly concrete in nature, including practical help in everyday life such as finding out office addresses, helping with document writing and use of social services, advice on issues concerning residence permits and maintaining connections with different authorities. Where the centre's expertise is inadequate, the clients are helped to find the necessary contacts and services. Hence, customers are told about work training courses but then guided to the Employment office where an educational contact person, also a returning emigrant, gives further information on the courses.

Behind crisis experiences is often a lack of language skills. Therefore the Ingrian Centre arranges basic courses and conversation groups in Finnish. There have been plenty of participants for acquisition of language proficiency is essential for the labour market. So as to help participants learn the language properly teaching is given on every week day during the six-month course. Recently the centre acquired with the employment subsidy its first paid Finnish language teacher. Previously courses were arranged on a voluntary basis.

The centre supports the establishment of workers' co-operatives as a channel for skilled returning emigrants towards Finnish working life. Returning emigrant women have already established two workers' co-operatives which are currently starting business activity. Co-operative Idelia offers English language training and started a bilingual kindergarten in co-operation with the city in autumn 1997. Aelita arranges Russian language remedial education for children as well as Russian language elementary and conversation courses for the Finns. These co-operatives are functioning independently in the premises offered by the centre.

Access

The services offered by the centre are available for all returning emigrants. Participants actively seek their way to the centre. The first contact is usually made by phone. The participants in the courses and club activities are returning emigrants from the metropolitan area but phone calls to guidance and crisis service are received from all over the country. There are no time limits for participation except for specific courses of finite duration.

The Ingrian Centre collects a membership fee of 50 marks a year. Members are allowed to use its services and take part in the courses. Payments for the courses are reasonable, usually 100 marks for a course. The original idea was to offer participation free of charge but the payment has strengthened the commitment of the participants and provided a small addition to the self-financing which is required when applying for public funding.

Club activities arranged for weekends are free of charge. Returning emigrants are invited to take part in joint club activity and to meet each other. A children's club, a singing and dancing club and a handiwork club are examples of independent club activity. The higher participation rate of women is balanced by the latest renovation project, to build a gym to the centre's former store-room, in which the men have been actively involved.

The guidance and crisis service is also available by phone and a line has been acquired for that purpose. The line is open on week-days from 11 to 19. Persons on duty speak Finnish, Russian and Estonian. It has become evident, however, that the clients in many cases prefer to come in person. Confidentiality is secured so that the worker and the client meet privately. On rare occasions the worker can make a house call. Sometimes the executive manager helps the returning emigrant with insufficient knowledge of language to take care of official matters.

Information on different courses sent by the Employment office and vocational adult training units is displayed on a noticeboard in the centre. Some employers come directly to the centre and leave announcements of vacancies although the centre has not actively marketed itself to the companies. The Employment service has not always been successful which is due to, among other things, the type of work available. Cleaning services' demand for employees is high but willing workers have been hard to find.

Brochures on the Ingrian Centre and its activity are available at the Unit for Alien Affairs which receives the immigrants, as well as in the Employment offices. Information is also heard from other immigrants and special activities are announced in the newspapers. The centre arranges cultural events which it is hoped will strengthen returning emigrants' identity but also give the Finnish population an opportunity to get acquainted with Ingrian culture and habits. PR work takes place mostly as presentations to visitors, who are numerous due to the wide interest aroused by returning emigrants.

The centre has a small library which contains literature in Finnish, Russian and Estonian, received as donations. Childcare facilities are not provided effectively but the staff has taken care of children when urgently required. Members can also have meals in the centre's lunch cafe where moderately priced home cooking is served. Meals are also delivered to small business employees in the neighbourhood.

> "I heard from the Ingrian Centre and its services from my acquaintances and newspaper. I started with a Finnish language course. I got a good basic training in Finnish; in summer there was good cultural programme where we met new people and got new friends. I also received help with the translation of the documents and telephone conversations" (woman, 45).
>
> "We were informed about the Ingrian Centre by our relatives. At first we took part in language courses which improved our language skills. We also got a lot of information and useful advice and new friends. We have started a co-operative with the help of the Ingrian Centre" (woman, 38 and man, 24).
>
> "I heard from the centre from my acquaintances and started with a basic course in Finnish language. Language education has been the best thing. In addition I got help in office matters. Here it is also possible to participate in all kinds of activities, club activities, handwork, etc." (woman, 28).

Networking

The Ingrian Centre has contacts in many directions including other Ingrian associations, social welfare offices, the Unit for Alien Affairs, the Social Office, the Central Union for Educational Service, the Central Union for the Welfare of the Aged and the ministries which finance the activity. In co-operation they have started to plan new projects to promote the integration of returning emigrants. The Ingrian Centre also aims at establishing a co-operation network with the Ingrian associations in other countries.

Outcomes and assessment

One of the advantages of the Ingrian Centre is that it is easily approached, which is partly due to the immigrant background of the employees. As returning emigrants they have recent experiences similar to those of their clients and thus possess an internalised view on adaptation to a new culture and way of life. Since most clients' knowledge of Finnish is poor, the chance to use their native language makes the centre approachable.

An additional advantage of the centre is the wide-ranging activity that covers more than only vocational needs. Nevertheless the close co-operation with the labour administration helps the centre to enhance the employment of its members. Co-operation could be further developed if the contact person of the employment office worked at a certain time in the Ingrian Centre and gave guidance in education and employment. This could in turn increase the accessibility of the guidance services. A step forward is that the contact person is a returning emigrant which is relatively rare in Finland. In all, it is important that immigrants themselves are creating and planning their own services

In its educational activities the Ingrian Centre stresses the main thing, that is, the teaching of Finnish language to the returning immigrants. Clients' jobseeking could be further enhanced if the long courses included the making of job applications and curriculum vitae. Jobseeking could also be furthered through access to computerised facilities.

According to the executive manager of the Ingrian Centre about 60 persons weekly take part in activities at the centre; in addition to that come phone calls to the crisis service. The female share of participation has been stronger but with the new vocational training course in building the number of men has increased. The participants are of different ages but in addition to working age people one group is made up of female pensioners. Most participants have been living in Finland at least for six months when making the first visit to centre.

No written feedback nor follow-up is collected from the users of the centre. The centre is interested in how the clients are coping after the course but follow up has not been organised. Unofficial and accidental information is received from those persons who regularly take part in the centre's activities.

Case study no. 42

Vire-projekti/Vantaan kriisipalvelu/ *Vire Project/Vantaa Crisis Service*

Vire-projekti/*Vire Project*
Vantaan kriisipalvelu/*Vantaa Crisis Service*
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Philosophy

"Practical touch, activity within easy reach and flexibility, in other words: the needs of the clients come first."

History, context and general structure

The Vire is a three-year project aiming to help the long-term unemployed to take care of their health and capabilities. The project was started in 1995 as a joint effort of the local association of the unemployed and Vantaa Crisis Service. It was influenced by the high unemployment rate, in particular long-term unemployment, in Vantaa. Prolonged unemployment can be economically and psychologically very difficult and lead to exclusion in many spheres of life. Close co-operation between the service system and so-called third sector in preventing exclusion has continued in the implementation of the project. The Vire is among the first experiments of this kind in Finland.

Vantaa Crisis Service represents a very non-traditional form of service. Drawing on expertise in many fields, it gives support and help in problems of unemployment, indebtedness and entrepreneurship. The idea is to provide from one centre a wide variety of services to people struggling with the problems caused by the economic recession. The Crisis service has been functioning since the beginning of 1992. The Crisis Service and Vire share a joint executive committee consisting of the following background organisations: Vantaa Social and Health Care Department, The Unemployed of Vantaa, Peijas Hospital, the Employment Office, the Parish Union and the Debt Counselling Service of Vantaa City. The Regional Director for the Social and Health Care Department serves as president of the committee.

The Crisis Service and the Vire share three employees hired for fixed terms. All employees have different employers. The service team is composed of a public-health nurse, a social counsellor and a psychologist who is also a jurist. In addition the services of another psychologist, a parish worker, a consulting psychiatrist and a debt counsellor are also available. Education and expertise in the field as well as experience in crisis work are required from personnel. Especially important is the ability to work with the target group as well as interactional skills.

In co-operation with the skilled workers, the project is run by an active group of volunteers, composed of the members of the Unemployed Association. They take part in initiating, planning, decision-making and implementation of the activity. Training in group dynamics, project planning and regional activities has been organised for the volunteers. Furthermore, seminars on current issues have been arranged for the target groups but are also attended by the organisers themselves. Except for the course on crisis work, there has been relatively little staff training on external courses, but group work counselling on an external basis has been arranged for both the volunteers and the personnel.

Funding for the project was granted for three years (1995-97), one year at a time. One of the financial supporters, the City of Vantaa, funds the office premises and the project equipment. The salaries are paid by the City of Vantaa, Peijas Hospital, and the Social and Health Care Department with the help of the labour administration, and the association of the unemployed with the financial aid from the Finnish Slot Machine Association. The aid from the association also covers all expenses of the gatherings, group activity and training arranged for the unemployed. It constitutes about 40 per cent of the total funding of the project. In addition, all have also offered expert consultation services.

Functions, target groups and content

The target groups of the Crisis Service are the unemployed, indebted people and entrepreneurs with problems residing in Vantaa; the long-term unemployed are the specific target group of the Vire. The project aims to prevent the social exclusion of these groups with the help of psychosocial prevention. Lines of action include a telephone service, individual conversations, family meetings, joint meetings with, for instance, guarantors and creditors as well as group activities. The difficult life situation of the client is analysed and feasible solutions worked out. According to the situation, the emphasis may be on economic issues, employment opportunities, human relations and the condition of health.

The telephone service is available for two hours on three weekdays and for one hour on two other days. The working methods in the project vary flexibly from reception work to fieldwork, organising different kinds of events and supporting independent activity. Individual counselling consists of estimation of skills and readiness, motivation and raising self-esteem. The client's future working life is planned. At the same time, general information and counselling in training and working life matters is provided. Individual counselling contains a lot of psycho-social counselling in social, health, economic, juridical and family- and housing-related problems.

One of the aims is to develop a model of preventive health care and a supportive network for the unemployed. Hence, health inspections and public-health nurse receptions have been arranged. Group activities to support unemployed persons' working capabilities have been organised together with the unemployed. In the health groups people have learned relaxation and there is a special group for those suffering from sleeping problems. Physical exercise, dancing courses, study trips and thematic events on unemployment security, self care and the self-initiated activity of the unemployed have been organised.

Generally the groups stay together for six months. Radio programme and writing groups have been functioning the longest, for a couple of years. Radio-groups have prepared programmes on unemployment for the regional transmissions of Radio Finland. Group activity to improve jobseeking facilities has been arranged as well. The jobseeking courses consist of writing job applications and curricula vitae, interview techniques and the beginning of the actual jobseeking process. Furthermore, there have been courses on positive interaction and interview techniques. The project staff delivers training in the first place. Volunteers among the unemployed have also served as group leaders.

As a new line of action a training of the unemployed as support persons for other unemployed was started in Vire. The trained group of volunteers decided to open a telephone service at the end of 1997. The service is to be open once a week on Friday evenings.

Access

The Crisis Service and Vire are communal services which are available for the target groups and their families in Vantaa. Although residence is a prerequisite for a longer contact, the client's place of domicile is not the first question asked by the crisis service. Referrals are not used: clients come on their own initiative. On many occasions debt counsellors and employment authorities advise people with problems to make contact with the crisis service. Health centres and mental health clinics also inform clients about the services.

A brochure on the crisis service also contains information about the Vire. Previously it was distributed in places where unemployed people go, including communal services. Due to the great number of clients, the crisis service has not been able to advertise its presence any more, but special events are advertised through free newspaper announcements and local radio. The activities of Vire are reported almost every week in local newspapers and radio to ensure that as many people as possible receive information. Furthermore, people are informed by word of mouth as well as by a mailing list of about two hundred people. From time to time they receive project notices and the Vire-paper, written by the unemployed writing group. Notices on group activities and other events can also be found on the noticeboards of the offices as well as in the premises of the unemployed association.

The project personnel has distributed information on different occasions, such as trade union events and A-clinics, and presented activities to visitors. Open information meetings were organised at the beginning of the project and before the health inspections were started.

Users make the first contact by phoning or dropping in but in most cases they phone first. Approximately 10-15 per cent of the clients find the phone service adequate; with others an appointment time is given. Services are free of charge and without time limit. Individual visits take on average one hour but in general the first time takes longer than that. The number of visits varies according to the client: one is content with one visit, another keeps on coming for months. Continued guidance is available even after employment. The frequency of visits is planned individually so as to guarantee a good start for working.

When losing one's job one also loses access to occupational health examinations. Therefore, in autumn 1995 physical examinations were started in the Vire and in co-operation with the employment office unemployed people were sent a letter inviting them for a health check-up. The check-up was focused on the general situation of the client with the help of a long interview and a few tests. Probably more than through these physical examinations, the unemployed have entered the Vire due to the visits of the public-health nurse. Appointments have taken place in libraries, at different kinds of events, in the premises of the unemployed and once in the local pub. Testing blood pressure gives an opportunity to talk with the nurse. Furthermore, the nurse has a weekly reception at different health centres. She has also organised meetings on specific health topics for the unemployed in their own premises.

The neighbourhood working activated by the Vire increases the accessibility of the services and promotes the activity of the unemployed in the area where they live, as well as securing the continuity of the activity after the project. As to support, training for regional contact persons, has been arranged. Their task is to develop neighbourhood activity in co-operation with the local authorities. So far unemployed associations with their own premises have been established in five districts of Vantaa (Tikkurila, Korso, Länsi-Vantaa, Koivukylä, Hakunila).

To ensure full confidentiality there is no data base on clients; information on clients is not available to any other authorities either. Individual sessions take place behind closed doors and written documents and notes are locked up. The opportunity to stay anonymous facilitates the use of crisis service.

There are no computers in use for the clients but they are allowed to use staff computers when writing job applications. Children are taken care of during the visits although child care is not available in a wider context. There are toys available for the children. In a situation where home visit is necessary, there is co-operation with the Mobile Support Centre.

> "The association of the unemployed in Vantaa made it possible for me to get in to the Vire-project which has motivated me in jobseeking. The project staff are nice people. This is the best thing that has happened for the unemployed in Vantaa. This kind of project should be continued" (woman, 52).
>
> "I heard about the Vire through the association and a newspaper ad. In practice the best thing in Vire has been the study visits and the Holma-days, which include information and contacts with other unemployed. I am now more active and Vire has given me an opportunity to do voluntary work and to make new acquaintances. It has been most important that there has been a nurse for the unemployed in the project" (man, 58).
>
> "I got involved with the project through the association of the unemployed in Vantaa. The best thing has been the opportunity to take part in the planning and implementation of activities, and so to act oneself. One can guide and give information to other people who are 'lost'. It feels good to help others in their own difficult life situation. I have been actively involved in exercise groups as I need a lot of exercise because of my health. There have been games and all sorts of possibilities and professional guidance, too. Vire has provided me with lots of ideas for different kinds of action" (woman, 59).

The premises of the crisis service consist of three office rooms and a groupwork room in connection with the debt counselling unit of the city; the premises are in the third floor of an office block, which it can be difficult to find the first time. The office premises with long corridors can be viewed in two ways: on the one hand it inspires the client with confidence when looking for debt counselling and juridical help but on the other hand it is rather gloomy from the point of view of other clients of the service. The physical accessibility of the services is enhanced by refunding bus fares but otherwise the clients do not receive any benefits in addition to the unemployment benefit. Group activities of the Vire are arranged in the premises of the unemployed associations, city gamehalls and other club premises all over the city and are thus more easily accessed than the actual project premises.

General attitudes towards crisis help and mental problems may pose a barrier to using the services. The crisis service as a concept is easily connected to mental problems. On the other hand, an indication of the gradual change of attitudes is that the authorities are now more than before guiding clients to the services.

Networking

The Crisis Service and the Vire are in close association with their partners who are represented on the joint executive committee, as well as with local employment projects, mental health clinics and social welfare services, the unemployed associations and projects (such as Idea-Points and Taitotalo) and the Occupational Health Institute. Since the beginning of the project there have been several trainees from the social and health care schools, a few months at time.

Contacts with local employers are made when employees are given notice. Project participants have taken part in trade union events. City council members have been met. There has been co-operation also with the adult education centre, A-clinics as well as the youth and sport department of the city. The Vire has organised network seminars where the group leaders and partners have discussed and planned practical activities. In addition, the group leaders have helped with the planning of other projects of the unemployed elsewhere in Finland as well as in the Advisory Committee of Employment.

Outcomes and assessment

The clients of the Vire are mainly middle-aged, over 45 years of age, unemployed with a low educational level. Many have taken some vocational training and are workers or lower officials. In most cases unemployment has lasted for years. Distribution according to sex is very equal, which is extraordinary considering that it is mostly women who venture to come to the crisis reception. The project, however, has succeeded in approaching men: "When money or work are under discussion, men touch upon other matters as well".

So far there is no systematically collected feedback from the clients but the participants will be requested for assessment at the end of the project. Their views on the services have been asked in practically every counselling session. Positive comments have been made on the comprehensive approach of the service as well as the fact that problems are taken seriously and attended to carefully. Flexibility is considered very important, meaning that the needs of the client are taken into account. The strength of the project is also that individual guidance is complemented with group activities; thus isolation can be decreased by expanding the activity and social networks of the unemployed. Group methods also create mutual encouragement.

A special strength of the Vire is that it joins the forces of the professionals and the unemployed. Successful activity has required resources from both parties equally. Successful implementation is also reflected in the feedback which emphasises the neighbourhood aspect of the activity: a local project is easy to approach. The Vire has been able to reach people in a sensitive way. Furthermore, considering the accessibility of the service it is important that groups are active and the public health nurse is reachable in the clients' own environment. That is one way how the groups in danger of exclusion can be reached better.

Although there has not been any systematic follow up on clients, it has become evident that job seeking groups have enhanced access to training and employment. With adequate resources activity could be developed by increasing the communicative and social skills of the participants, as well as training in computer facilities. Prejudices among the employers are also being broken down. These forms of action are included in the continuation project of the Vire.

Case study no. 43

Sateenkaari -projekti/*Rainbow Project*

Sateenkaari -projekti/*Rainbow Project*

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Philosophy

"Some kind of employment or training opportunity should be found for everybody but it must be client-centred."

History, context and general structure

As the tendency of long-term unemployment has continued in the labour market, employment officers and psychologists have been hired for the so called *pat* posts (*pat* = *pitkäaikaistyöttömät*, long-term unemployed) which were created in the labour administration in 1995. In the employment offices they compose expert teams of three persons concentrating on services targeted specifically at the long-term unemployed. Previously there was special employment counselling organised in the employment offices for two other target groups, disabled people and young people. In the Employment Office of Espoo the Tapiola *pat*-team was organised in 1996; their Rainbow-team comprises two special employment officers and a psychologist. At first they were hired for fixed terms but now the posts are permanent.

In the Employment Office of Tapiola special counselling for the long-term unemployed is carried out in the framework of the Rainbow-project as well as the activation project organised by the Ministry of Labour; the latter has provided additional financing for activation group counselling. The Rainbow-team has a free hand to implement their own ideas and they answer independently for the planning, co-ordination, implementation, networking and follow-up of the activity. Team meetings take place weekly. The office management group monitors the activity at the general level and it is also monitored by the working group of the ministry.

Experience in working with disabled people, flexible team skills and motivation are required from the team members. In comparison to normal vocational guidance, the therapeutic role is emphasised by the work of a psychologist. Further training has been acquired through active participation in versatile personnel training provided by the labour administration. Special training is arranged for both the *pat*-officers and the psychologists.

Functions, target groups and content

The guidance process begins with the mapping of the situation so that the barriers to employment are clarified. The aim is to activate the client towards employment or training and to encourage him/her for change. The main principle is a client-centred process-like service.

The target group is defined separately for each year. At the beginning it included all the long-term unemployed registered at the office. In 1997 measures were targeted to the most difficult group, that is clients who have been uninterruptedly unemployed for more than three years. During the year there were about 380 of them in the Rainbow-project. The special target group of the team psychologist was those unemployed for more than five years; their number was about 60.

Most jobseekers who had been unemployed for more than three years were 35-50-year-old men. In over half of the cases their basic education was elementary school. Work experience was gained in the industrial, storage and building sectors. Many men were lonely and had gone through divorce. Women made up a little over 10 per cent of the target group and their work experience was mainly in office work. Many women had been away from work because of child care or other reasons and their clerical and IT-skills were outdated. The majority of the target group wanted to return to working life and only a small part had completely lost their motivation to work.

Due to good results the target group was expanded the next year to clients whose jobseeking had lasted for more than two years. A special target group is composed of those jobseekers who have been 500 days on unemployment benefit.

Methods include both individual and group counselling. The emphasis is clearly on individual counselling with thorough interviews and close contacts with the clients in several ways, such as personal visits to a vocational counsellor every two or three weeks. It is a process of small steps. In most cases many kinds of examinations are needed, such as physical examination, assessment of working capability and other activation, before employment and training alternatives can be realistically considered. Special emphasis is required on motivation, activation and support of the clients. The method is comparable to a case management approach.

Group work aims at activating the clients, to get them on the move and interested in their own life situation. Areas of content have been mapping one's own situation and increasing self-knowledge, wakening of social activity, looking after one's own working capability as well as information on labour markets, services, employment and training opportunities. In 1997 the Rainbow-team organised eight activation groups; participation in the group has been mainly voluntary.

In order to increase knowledge of skills and oneself, psychological tasks and tests as well as functional methods have been used. Infos, tailor-made courses for target group and other training opportunities (such as apprenticeships), work practice, subsidised work and ESF-projects have also been available to the clients. In 1997 conditioning days, an ADP-certificate course and two guidance courses, one of them targeted for clients with alcohol problems, were arranged for the clients.

Together the client and the officer draw up a jobseeking plan which includes measures promoting the client's employment. The planning process not only strengthens counselling but also motivates and engages the jobseeker in the process.

Access

The *pat*-team of the employment office follows the duration of a client's unemployment through the labour administration's computer system. When unemployment has continued for a certain time the jobseeker is invited by letter to an interview with the special vocational counsellor. After mapping the situation about one third of the clients are guided further to the vocational guidance psychologist. They are mainly career changers and persons who have unclear career plans as well as persons in need of psychological examinations such as, for example, testing for training opportunities. Last year persons with more than five years of unemployment had direct access to counselling by a vocational guidance psychologist.

Information on the Rainbow-project has been given and regular meetings arranged with the collaborating partners; through them many clients come to the service. Word of mouth has also brought some jobseekers to the service. A brochure on the project has not been made as it would be too binding; instead, a short description of the project has been enclosed with invitation letters.

It has required a lot of work to motivate the jobseekers to go along to the group activity. The threshold to participate has been high for many clients; some are nervous about the group work and some are even a little scared, especially if they have no previous experience of group activity. In Rainbow no one is provided with group counselling only, but when a client has had individual counselling in some cases group work becomes part of the process. When jobseekers have got involved, the groups have functioned surprisingly well. There have been 8-10 participants in a group.

In order to promote independent jobseeking the clients are instructed step by step how to use a self-service terminal. For the writing of job applications there is a computer and a printer available. The wide-ranging training and vocational information service of the employment office is also available for the clients.

During the project jobseekers receive training benefit which equals unemployment benefit. Additionally, refund of travelling costs for the group activity and assessment of working capability are given. There is no time limit for participation in counselling. When a client starts in training or subsidised work, for instance, counselling has continued and the client has met with the team after the activity in order to get support for continuation planning.

Views of the clients participating in the group activity according to the questionnaires of the employment office: The best thing in the activity has been "the positive attitude everyone has had and searching for solutions"; "The participants had been working in different fields"; "Positiveness and the counsellor were the best in the group"; "Good open atmosphere"; "Team spirit"; "Nice pals"; "Good atmosphere and good counsellors".

Networking

The Rainbow team has worked in close co-operation inside the employment office, especially with the training unit, employment subsidy unit and Silkkitie-project which is aimed at older long-term unemployed people. In addition the team is collaborating with Ammatti-instituutti (Vocational Adult Education Centre) and Espoo City, both of which have ESF projects for the long-term unemployed.

In individual counselling, co-operation with the SII, social welfare and heath care authorities is necessary. There are meetings with health station psychologists, contacts with psychiatric nursing and a consultant doctor in the field of occupational health care is also available. For assessment of working capability clients have been sent to the Rehabilitation Foundation, the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, Orton and to the social hospital of Järvenpää. In working capability examinations, rehabilitation research consultancies are consulted. Group activity has been carried out in co-operation with the Finnish Federation of the Visually Handicapped, Tapiola Parish, the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health and Medivire.

Furthermore, there is an internal information network of the labour administration in use through which experiences with other *pat*-officers can be exchanged across the country.

Outcomes and assessment

There is follow-up information on the Rainbow-project available for the year 1997 according to which clients can be divided into three groups. One group is capable of working and easily employed when activated. They need a little push to get on the move. For the second group, work or training alternatives have been found through multiphase working and long processes. In the third group are clients whose situation is so difficult that the employment office services are inadequate and the team is not able to provide them with any help.

Physical examinations showed that there are many who had a significant weakening of their working capability. Thus several clients had to be guided to rehabilitation to improve their opportunities to cope with working life. One of the main barriers to employment is health-related factors, especially intoxicant and mental problems which are most obvious among those who had experienced the longest period of unemployment. One third of the target group had a minor or severe problem with alcohol, another third suffered from mental problems, mainly depression. These problems are partly overlapping.

Unwillingness to undergo training became evident in the project. The majority of the clients were not willing to take up training even if lack of vocational training was the barrier to employment. Half of the clients who did start the training had participated in career guidance where a solution could be found.

Feedback from those clients who took part in group activity has been very positive. The jobseekers have been positively surprised and glad about the versatility of the employment office services; it has surpassed their expectations. A versatile "service plate" is one of the strengths of the project; a suitable alternative is sought for everyone, if possible. Most alternatives had been available before, but in the project framework they have been worked up to suit the target groups better and then offered them more persistently. The project has proved that close personal contact is a productive method of guidance. It is important that client is not left alone but provided with long-term support until a solution has been found.

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Case study no. 44

Valtti-projekti / *Valtti Project*

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Philosophy

"Patience is a virtue; it takes time to change a life."

History, context and general structure

The Probation and After Care Association's Tampere Activity Centre (Toke) was established in 1986 with a mission to support the rehabilitation and employment of people recently released from prison and to help their integration into society. The range of services today includes tutored training, preparation for working life and vocational training as well as social work and accommodation services. The main objectives of Toke are to increase the availability of services, particularly in training and employment, to former criminals. It is a fact that services aimed at the general public are often ill-suited to people who have a criminal background. It is also a fact that people offering these services are often ill-equipped to deal with the special problems of former offenders.

The Activity Centre initiated the 4-year Valtti-project in 1996 with financial support from the ESR and the Finnish Labour Administration. This guaranteed funding has allowed slightly longer-term planning than had been the case before. In 1996 the total budget for the project was FIM 1 m., of which one quarter was the Centre's own service income. The project co-ordinating group is made up of representatives from the Ministry of Justice Prison Department, Local Administration, Employment Office and the Probation and After Care Association as well as the EU Co-ordinator of the TE Centre, a researcher from the University of Tampere and the Director and a staff representative from the Activity Centre. The practical implementation and monitoring are the responsibility of a project team which is made up of the Centre personnel.

The staff of the Activity Centre has doubled since 1995; at the moment the Centre employs 25 staff, some of whom work part-time. Increasingly the employment contracts are short-term contracts until the end of the project. The staff consists of, for example, social workers and supervisors. In addition there are young men doing their non-military civil service and social work students on placements. The basic requirements of the staff are strong professional skills and a system of values which accommodates a belief in individual self-development. The attitude to work is very important: while it is necessary to view criminal activity with a professional detachment, it is also important to show a firm moral stand in order to avoid over-empathising and accepting false explanations. To be successful in this work one needs to be committed and passionate. Some in-service training courses have already been organised for staff and it is recognised as one of the areas for continuous development.

Functions, target group and content

The process of integration back into society is long and full of pitfalls. The objective of the Valtti-project is to break the vicious circle of re-offending and increasing the exclusion of offenders by developing learning and working environments that support the clients' own efforts towards self-development. The basic idea is to build pathways to training and work in co-operation with the former offenders themselves, using the services offered by the Centre and the project partners.

The model incorporates step-by-step progress towards better management of everyday life, giving up criminal activity and the use of intoxicants and towards using mainstream services. At the beginning, while still in prison, the clients receive tutored training; later they attend the Activity Centre's so-called Key-course. During the first month they have training on a specific theme and receive individual and group counselling, after which they start a six-month work practice or a trial period at an educational institution. One of the main objectives of the Key-course is to draw up a realistic action plan for each individual client. The range of Valtti project activities includes services such as an employment clinic, assessment of the client's physical, psychological and social abilities, work practice and periods of sheltered work. The pathway provides access to vocational training (car mechanics and catering) where some of the training takes place at the premises of the Activity Centre on special courses. Some of the training is implemented as apprenticeship training.

The Valtti project target group are offenders whose periods of unemployment have lengthened and whose lifestyles have become or are becoming criminal. Of all the Valtti project clients 90 per cent have served at least one prison sentence; over half of them were imprisoned for the first time when they were under 20 years of age; 80 per cent have no vocational qualifications or have discontinued their studies; 50 per cent are drug addicts. 75 per cent of the clients are under 30, while the average age is 23. Women represent 5 per cent of the clients (compared with 3 per cent of the prison population).

Access

Valtti services are available through participation in the Key-courses. Anyone can apply to the Key-courses, even while still serving a prison sentence as long as the applicant has permission to study. Selection is made by a counsellor from the Employment Office and a social worker from the Activity Centre, who is also a tutor on the Key-courses. In addition to the general selection criteria, the potential clients are interviewed; this is considered an important part of the selection process. During the interview the client's life situation is assessed; his or her motivation, co-operation and chances of succeeding in his/her studies are also assessed.

The Activity Centre has marketed its services to several co-operative partners. Study counsellors and social workers in prisons have directed clients to Valtti. Civilians have found Valtti through the Probation and After Care Service, employment offices and social service offices. There are also those who have come on their own initiative, having heard about Valtti from former project clients. The best channel has, however, been the organisations within the prison service and the Probation and After Care Service. A brochure which contains all the necessary information on several pages is used in marketing. The brochure is suitable for potential clients as well as employers when the Centre is looking for suitable work and apprenticeship places.

The project is located in the Häme region and just over half of the clients are local. The Key-courses are considered normal employment training courses and therefore the students are eligible for normal student allowances.

> "I heard about the project from friends, and applied through the employment office. The best thing has been the relaxed attitude, because people who study here must have difficulties in every area of their lives. Studying can be difficult, at least in the beginning. The activities of Toke have helped me to stay out of prison anyway. It's a good place, we need more like this in Finland" (male, 25 years).
>
> "I have some friends who have been here and they have told me about Toke and then my support person and I came to visit. The Activity Centre gives you many different alternatives and it has helped me make some good decisions for the future. The staff is good and people get on with each other" (female, 26 years).
>
> "First I heard about the Key-course from the employment office and then I came to see for myself. The best thing has been the new hobbies I have been introduced to here. Through the Toke activities I got interested in study and with the help of studying I have been able to stay away from alcohol. At the Activity Centre people care for each other and nobody thinks they are better than anyone else" (female, 29 years).
>
> "I applied when I was still in prison. The best thing is the freedom and the fact that you always have something to do" (male, 33 years).

Networking

The Activity Centre operates in co-operation with the regional representations of the Ministries of Justice, Education and Labour. The most important partners are the prisons, the local offices of the Probation and After Care Association, employment offices, social services offices, alcoholics' organisations, vocational colleges and employers. In addition there is co-operation with Kela, rehabilitation centres and the university.

Outcomes and assessment

At best the project has been able to stop the process of exclusion and to find pathways to training, working life and generally back into society. The specialised services offered by the project have been essential for most of the clients as they are generally unable to take advantage of the normal training or employment services. Through Valtti it has been possible to develop new solutions for employing the client group by, for example, modifying the contents and methods of training courses to suit the clients' needs and giving them opportunities for work practice and working at the Activity Centre's own activities.

About 80-90 persons apply to Valtti annually and 60 are accepted. The Activity Centre considers the number of applicants too small to make a justified selection because the risk of dropping out is often evident already at the selection stage. The biggest problem is the lack of co-operation between the different officials, because, for example, the employment offices and social services do not reach the clients after they have dropped out of the normal system. More efficient recruitment of clients requires active co-operation between the labour administration, the prison service, the

Probation and After Care Service and the social services. If identifying potential clients were easier it would be possible to invite them to hear about the project and try to encourage them to apply at the same time.

The statistics for 1996 show that the quantitative targets have been achieved better than those concerning employment and training. During the first two months almost half of the initial participants dropped out, but after that the drop-out rate decreased significantly. After the Key-course individual pathways have been much more successful, and in particular it has been possible to develop training pathways successfully. The Activity Centre has been able to obtain training places also in organisations outside the Centre.

The clients manifest many risk factors which could lead to exclusion: lack of training and work experience, functional difficulties and difficulties in managing many areas of their lives, as well as the fact that they do not have many choices open to them. An additional problem is, for example, the use of alcohol and drugs, which has been the most common reason for dropping out. Integration back into society can only be achieved through the long-term development of specialised services. The Valtti-project has provided the framework and continuity to this work.

The project combines tutoring and vocational training, socialisation through work as well as social work. The Activity Centre provides opportunities for change by offering the facilities needed for new approaches, chances to develop professionally and support in clarifying life goals.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following sections present recommendations for adult guidance and counselling services and for policymakers compiled on the basis of case studies, the literature and expert interviews. The basic questions we addressed were how disadvantaged adults, i.e. those in danger of social exclusion from the labour market, can be helped to overcome barriers to access, and what guidance and counselling can usefully do to prepare users to move into education, training and employment.

Thus, in addition to the actual issue of access, the following conclusions and recommendations also apply to other key aspects of guidance and counselling services which influence, for instance, whether users of services feel that these are sufficiently useful to encourage them to continue long enough to find a solution according to plan.

With structural changes in working life, powerful pressure for reform has also focused on the vocational guidance and counselling system during the 1990s. Increasingly unstable employment relationships, changes in vocational structures and job descriptions, and growing unemployment have built up a need for vocational and educational counselling specifically for adults. The established system maintained by the public sector has been complemented by a number of separate projects, of which even more have been set up since Finland's accession to the EU in 1995. At the same time, projects now focus more often than before on groups in danger of social exclusion. It is, in fact, characteristic of the cases dealt with in the Finnish section of this study, that guidance and counselling services have been arranged in project form.

The following gives an overview of methods which have proved effective in promoting access to vocational guidance and counselling for groups threatened by exclusion from the labour market, beginning with tangible measures. After that, we deal with other significant questions concerning the content and implementation of services from the point of view of users.

ACCESS

Information on services

The key factor influencing access to services is the information available about the services on offer. Potential clients must somehow be made to realise that a service exists and that they may benefit from it. It is equally important to ensure that information reaches various co-operating bodies, interest groups and other service organisations. Where most of the guidance and counselling services in this study were concerned, the importance of information to target groups and co-operating bodies was emphasised during the start-up phase. After that, this kind of active marketing effort was no longer made, as demand and supply were well matched as far as resources were concerned. A fairly low profile is usually maintained in information provision at times when there is reason to fear that active campaigns might bring in such a flood of clients that the resources will not suffice to serve them all. However, this approach begs the question of whether information on services then reaches people who are passivised and paralysed to the point where they are incapable of looking for information at all. These are the very people who run the biggest risk of exclusion from the labour market. If any importance is attached to involving them in guidance and counselling services, efforts will have to be made to actively continue information provision after the initial stage, too.

Problems arising from a shortage of resources do not apply solely to project-type services; clients of the normal public guidance services may also have to wait weeks or even months for guidance or counselling. Clients are advised to spend the waiting period by taking advantage of other, more readily available services - for instance by using information services or participating in group guidance, both of which require some measure of initiative on the part of clients themselves.

Leaflets

One of the primary forms of information provision consists of leaflets and brochures about services. These should be informative, easy to read and clearly organised, and should include information on the aims and content of services and how to apply for guidance, with up-to-date information on how to contact the service provider. The importance of such leaflets should not be underestimated, as they give people an opportunity to find out more about a service at their leisure, and they can also refer back to the leaflet to second-check details if necessary. Leaflets about the services should be made readily available in places that the target group is likely to frequent, such as public libraries, the premises of various clubs and organisations, employment offices, various offices of the social welfare and health care organisation, and the premises of other interest groups. Leaflets can also usefully be distributed to co-operating bodies, where they could be made available to clients both in lobbies and waiting areas, and for distribution during personal consultations. A leaflet, circular, project information bulletin or magazine which is posted directly to clients (such as *Näsinkulma*) is another way of keeping in touch.

Events

'Open days' provide potential clients with an opportunity to have a closer look at what goes on in an anonymous and 'secure' capacity, without any pressure to commit themselves to using the services. In addition to events organised on the service's premises, the target group can also be approached by arranging free events such as public meetings in their own environment. When the venue is chosen, it should be remembered that the usual settings for public events may be perceived as too formal by the target group. Another way of providing information on services is to visit events arranged by other organisations to tell those present about them.

Media

The media make it possible to reach large numbers of people all at once. Useful channels include advertisements and features on local radio and television, Internet services, and local newspapers and free distribution papers. One important medium has in fact proved to be the information work done spontaneously by clients of the services and by volunteer workers, viz. the grapevine.

Reaching out

The threshold for contacting a service provider can be lowered by contacting the client first. If clients are approached by letter, the tone and content of the letter should be meticulously planned to ensure that it is not perceived as coercive. The personal approach requires particular tact when it involves public services, as people too easily interpret actions by the authorities as attempts to control them. The tangible action proposed in a letter might be an invitation to a personal consultation to map out the present situation, following which the client would be offered different alternatives. This method has been used in the *Sateenkaari* (Rainbow) project in Espoo, where the long-term unemployment team at the local employment office monitored the duration of clients' unemployment and invited them to personal consultations, thus initiating an intensive guidance process. Being contacted in person prompts the client to take a new look at his own situation. It can also act as an effective incentive to begin looking for a solution to an unsatisfactory situation.

The guidance staff can also approach their target group by getting out of the office and actually making themselves available in their clients' own environment. The option of making the first contact in a familiar environment is conducive to a sense of security and makes it easier to actually get in touch. Another project for the long-term unemployed (the *Vire* project) involved field visits by a specially employed public-health nurse to places such as public libraries, various events and the premises of organisations for the unemployed. This approach offered clients a low-key means of contact, and in addition to having a physical health check-up they could talk generally about their circumstances, and obtain information on the *Vire* project and what it could do to prevent psycho-social problems. People often feel that it is more socially acceptable to contact specialists about their physical health than about mental and social issues. This fact has also been used to good advantage within the *Vire* project, by inviting clients to physical examinations where they were given additional information on various guidance and counselling services. In the physical examinations, the emphasis was on charting the client's overall situation based on a thorough interview, as well as checking their general health. This approach proved fruitful in the sense that the gender division of *Vire* participants was very equal, whereas very few men in Finland as a whole generally seek out crisis services or services in general.

Information for co-operating bodies and other organisations
Providing information on services for co-operating bodies, various service organisations and their staff is just as important as in the case of the actual target group. These other organisations can refer clients of their own services to other services which may answer their needs better. The bodies to be informed may include training organisations, NGOs, local government bodies, social service offices, local parishes, trade unions, employment offices, immigration authorities, politicians and funding bodies. In addition to the methods mentioned above, suitable information channels include information meetings, mutual visits, papers given at seminars and conferences, reports on operations, research, trade fairs, etc. All in all, it is important for operations to be presented openly to all interest groups, and for all requests for visits to be accepted.

Regardless of the methods chosen when information and marketing are planned, the characteristic features of target groups should always be borne in mind. If the group can be involved in planning, for instance, publications, this will make it easier to consider cultural, class, gender and age differences. As an example, differences have been identified in the way men and women take on the role of client, with men being more reluctant than women to seek out services and use them. Reluctance to be a client is a common attitude among men, while women are less likely to attempt to distance themselves from this role. Women, on the other hand, underestimate their ability to achieve what they want. If they are allowed to gather information themselves from open counters or shelves, notice boards or computer terminals, men can avoid feeling like actual clients, though they may perceive a personal consultation behind closed doors with a service professional as a threat to their independence (Eräsaari 1994, 100).

In marketing and information, other issues which are important for the target group should also be considered - for instance, services should be free of charge and voluntary, and no time limits should be imposed. The naming of the service should also be approached with caution, as people's resistance to contacting it in a problematic situation may be very high if the name clearly reflects some threat of exclusion, such as the term 'crisis service' (cf. the ***Ingrian Centre***, ***Vire***).

First impressions, service climate and other factors

Reception
There are different ways of creating a supportive and encouraging ambience. The staff at the reception or information desk can be selected to suit the target group - to match certain features such as age and background, for instance - ageing clients could be served by mature staff and immigrants by staff with an immigrant background and

people with extensive language skills. The staff must consist of sociable, approachable people who can encourage clients to make an appointment for a personal consultation if needed.

Guidance staff

In guidance and counselling services for special groups, a confidential service relationship is considered essential. Changing counsellors and uncertainty about reliable contacts may cut short a promising guidance process. Counselling for special groups often requires a long-term holistic approach, and this, in turn, demands commitment and multi-vocational expertise from counsellors. In the case of groups difficult to employ, the work of the counsellor may emphasise aspects of the therapist's role, something which requires additional competence compared with work with 'normal' clients. Counselling staff should therefore be given the opportunity to take part in staff training and mentoring to acquire skill in developing their own occupational skills and to help them cope.

The importance of employing staff who share background experiences with clients is perceived as being particularly important in the case of immigrants who are having problems coping with cultural differences and language in Finnish society. 'Returning emigrants' from Ingria could be given as an example; these people do not usually speak any Finnish and their Russian identity differs from a western one. The staff at the Inkerikeskus ('Ingrian Centre') which serves returning Ingrians have themselves recently been through the difficult immigration process, and this leaves them better able to handle clients' difficulties. Staff with an immigrant background can also help reduce resistance to seeking services, as clients can expect them to understand what they are going through because of their own personal experience, and may be able to use their own first language.

Certain groups, such as people recovering from psychological problems, may need even more intense guidance and counselling than others. Commitment to the process requires the client to be given sufficient advance information about the nature of the process, its aims and methods. At Laptuote, this is ensured through a personal visit that the client can make either on his own or with his contact person. The services are explained, and the client is given time to think it over, before deciding whether what is offered is right for him. A longish induction period provides both parties with a chance to decide whether the guidance and counselling services on offer meet the client's needs and whether he will benefit (cf. Näsinkulma). The first impression is important in the guidance process, so it should be given sufficient attention.

Service location and premises

The service location and premises are also instrumental in deciding whether clients use services. In order to ensure good access, the premises should be located near public transport routes, preferably in an area frequented by the target group. Conventional premises in public office buildings with long corridors may be perceived as intimidatingly official.

Services could have their own direct phone line for client contacts. Client contact by phone offers people the choice of remaining anonymous, and the client does not necessarily have to be present in person, something which makes services more accessible. Telephone advisory services also offer a direct way of giving clients advice. Applications for more long-term guidance could also be made by phone, rather than by filling in complicated official forms.

Internet services

The use of computer systems and information networks is another way of making 'self-service' information services more accessible. Internet services provide both guidance staff and clients with opportunities for rapid information searches. Even remote municipalities have installed self-service computer terminals in public libraries for general use, where the Internet is available free of charge. The labour administration's Internet services provide information on vacancies, training and how to finance studies, and also career descriptions and other information on work and training. Jobseekers can also market their skills to employers on the labour administration's web pages. The Apaja centre at the University of Helsinki has started up the first interactive careers planning and jobsearch Internet service in Finland. *Virtuaali-Apaja* provides advice on work and careers planning, enables people to discover their own strengths, skills and talents through various self-assessment tests, and provides virtual courses. The *Apaja* services are free of charge to users, because they are funded by the Ministry of Education.

Participation and continuation of the guidance process

Clients' access to guidance begins when they receive information about an existing service and realise it may be just what they need. After this, potential clients must be encouraged to begin the guidance process, and must be given support during the process so that they do not drop out.

When the aim is to give someone the incentive to find work or training and encourage them to change their own situation, the best way of helping is by offering a variety of different options based on individual needs. In addition to services for groups and individuals, other options could be on-the-job training, work testing, mapping working capacity, working capacity assessment and referral to rehabilitation in co-operation with the health care and social services. Some means of assessing the client's working capacity is usually needed before the guidance process can proceed with finding the client a suitable job or training option.

Economic factors

The economic requirements and effects of services should always be taken into account in arranging services for people who are becoming excluded from the labour market. Economic factors can be used in making the service more approachable and appealing. In practice, this might mean, for instance, partial compensation for meals or travel. For women with child-care commitments, child-minding services provided in connection with the training make it possible for them to take part in guidance and related activities, such as skills training for working life. Above all, economic factors and actual cuts in income should not be permitted to form a barrier to the use of services.

The economic factors which influence participation often derive from the system itself. For instance, it is not possible to pursue full-time studies while receiving daily unemployment allowance unless the studies in question are labour market training, but because labour market training is only arranged in limited amounts and on limited subjects, it can often be difficult to take part in training without a drop in income level. A new form of training support was introduced in autumn 1998, the 'daily training allowance', and this gives unemployed people better scope for improving their vocational qualifications without having their income reduced below the level of the daily unemployment allowance. The new subsidy only applies to some unemployed, but there are now plans to extend it to other groups as well, making support for studies on one's own initiative available to increasing numbers. The various forms of support should be continuously developed like this, and the legislation should also be amended to leave scope for flexible solutions. As everyone naturally wants a secure income, training should be made an attractive alternative where income is concerned, rather than making people risk the income they have in order to take part.

Incentive traps have been taken into consideration in programmes such as the Näsinkulma club-house transitional stage employment programme, where clients are gradually introduced to working life through 'transitional jobs' on the open labour market. The aim is to give participants an opportunity for motivating work and a chance to try their chances in working life without losing their pensions or other benefits. This method is also secure for the employer, as the job is first mastered by a member of the club staff, who then trains not only the actual employee but also ‘deputies’, to ensure that the work is carried out. This practice was made possible through a co-operation arrangement with the public sector, but extensive application of the method would require better co-ordination of social security and salaries.

Holistic approach

Guidance often involves not just training and working skills issues, but also the client’s entire life situation, helping people to attain control over their lives and maintain mental balance. Thus guidance and support services for the disabled, for instance, combine promotion of skills and expertise needed in working life with rehabilitation and socialisation. If a client in a highly specialised service system is forced to seek help with different problems from different agencies, this places another barrier in his way and may also mean getting conflicting advice. By contrast, service on the ‘one counter’ principle take the client’s entire life situation into account.

The life situation of those facing labour market exclusion has been taken into account in the *Vire* project, aimed at the long-term unemployed, where the issues to be covered with each client comprise solutions to finding a job, the economic situation, debt problems, family and other relationships, psychological state and overall health; what weighting is given to these matters depends on the client’s needs. A holistic approach to guidance for those in danger of exclusion means that the focus is not merely on vocational guidance issues, which cannot sensibly be separated into a discrete area; instead, attention focuses on the entire context of the individual in question.

From the client’s point of view, attention should focus on the uniformity and consistency of the entire guidance process, so that factors such as previous studies and guidance activity could complement each other. Co-operation between guidance services and training would mean better integration between them, helping to create a rational ‘package’ designed to meet the individual client’s needs.

In vocational guidance for people recovering from psychological problems, it is also most efficient to combine practice of the skills needed in working life with various forms of support, forming a holistic guidance unit. Rehabilitation clients who still feel uncertain about coping should be offered a secure environment and a support network so that they can practise the skills needed in working life and learn the social conventions of the workplace. At Laptuote, for instance, clients progress during induction from easy tasks to more demanding ones, while also trying to attain the individual goals set for them in four areas: control over their own lives, social skills, group interaction and work performance. Practical work makes it possible to get to grips with one’s life in an entirely new way and to build confidence in one’s ability to cope with working life. The most important elements in guidance for the disabled are to provide motivating daily activity based on the rehabilitation client’s own needs, and to draw on clients’ resources and strengths in order to reinforce their self-esteem and confidence. Rehabilitation clients should be given opportunities to test their skills and assess their own abilities without any demands for success, a principle which operates at both Laptuote and the Näsinkulma club-house.

Holistic guidance calls for multi-vocational expertise and teamwork skills from the staff providing guidance and support services. Information on other sources of help for clients is also needed, in case of situations where the staff cannot help, and co-operation should be established with these sources so that clients can be flexibly referred to the appropriate service.

Individually tailored services

When a client is in danger of becoming wholly excluded from working life, normal 'light' measures produced as 'mass services' are no longer enough to achieve a change. At this point, in-depth client-specific service is needed, and guidance should be individual and intensive, deriving from clients' own situations, needs and wishes. Attention should also be paid to what the client is being guided towards, and what kind of guidance makes sense: does it make sense to encourage someone who is nearly 60 years old to find work, or would s/he be better off looking for an alternative to salaried employment?

Attention to clients' individual needs and the targeting of actions accordingly require services to be flexible, something which is often achieved most effectively in guidance services carried out in the form of projects. The aim of such projects is to discover and develop new operating models which suit their target groups best, and their activities are not bound by old procedures. For instance, various EU projects in recent years have developed individually tailored guidance operations which have brought about an improvement in the employment potential even of severely disabled people.

The importance of individual solutions has also been recognised in 'mass services', and the labour market administration now targets special measures at long-term unemployment. Although unemployment has fallen since the recession in the early 1990s, long-term unemployment is still a persistent problem. In order to deal with this, special long-term unemployment staff and teams have been set up at employment offices to take charge of guidance for this particular target group. A team usually consists of specialist employment consultants and a careers choice psychologist. The chance to focus exclusively on a specific target group, and frequent and regular personal contact with clients have produced results. The *Sateenkaari* project in Espoo supplemented personal guidance with various activities used within the labour market administration before, but which could be offered to clients within the project with unprecedented intensity and determination. This type of in-depth service has prompted a great deal of positive feedback from clients; it has also improved the image of the labour administration because it makes services human and is individual, long-term and varied.

As a starting point for individual guidance services, it is important to discover the jobseeker's aptitude, and this has been done in practice in, for instance, the Helsinki metropolitan area immigrants' work and training project, where vocational skills tests are made. The tests show how each immigrant's work experience and vocational training compare with Finnish requirements, and what supplementary training or re-training can be provided to improve employment potential and help prevent exclusion.

An important practical aid in arranging individual guidance services is the individual training and job-seeking plan drawn up with the client. This is a personal plan which outlines short-term and long-term goals and the means to attaining them, motivating clients to take part in guidance and boosting their commitment to the process. Achievement of the aims set out is monitored during the guidance process and the plan is adjusted according to the client's situation. Depending on the individual solutions, guidance can also be continued flexibly if the need arises.

Membership of a group and community

Many services emphasise the importance of group services to supplement individual guidance. Group activities help reduce the isolation which characteristically plagues those excluded from the labour market, by expanding their interaction and relationship network. As members of a group, clients can reflect on their own situation through those of others and get encouragement from other group members, realising that they are not alone in their problems. Group activity also develops the co-operation skills needed in working life. The position of a client receiving guidance is different in a group from in individual guidance, where one of the participants assumes the professional role of advisor and the other is a client, even though the basic idea is to focus on the customer. In a group, the client receives support from others who share his position, and this reinforces independent initiative.

Motivating clients requires a great deal of effort not only in individual guidance but also in guidance through group sessions. Being part of a group may provide security for members during activities such as introductory visits, but many people may experience great resistance to joining in group activities, especially if they have no prior experience. People are often very nervous about taking part in groups, as being in a group means they have to 'go out on a limb'. Participation in group activities should, in fact, be on the client's terms, something that supplements individual guidance. Ways of making group participation easier include selective composition of groups. Group activities for women only in women's jobsearch projects have been rated highly by group members for their openness and their holistic approach.

Working together and support from the community, or peer support, are also key features of the Fountain House operating model. Several Fountain House club-houses which help promote the employment of rehabilitated mental patients have been founded in Finland during the last few years. These have been developed as a form of support for outpatient care, on the terms of the clients themselves and to meet their needs. This model combines psychosocial rehabilitation with learning the skills needed in working life. The position of the guidance staff is not emphasised in any way, but the members and counsellors are together responsible for the operations of the club-houses. This requires a certain change of attitude from staff, as they must acknowledge a shift in their own role, from being a carer to working jointly with patients.

Milestones on the way to independence

In a guidance process based on the client's own situation, the counsellor does not map out the client's life, but encourages the client to map out his or her own. In this process, it is crucial to find a balance between responsibility and independence for each client. Although clients must be given responsibility for the progress made, excessive faith should not be placed in their initiative and motivation, as there is then a danger of the client abandoning the process after suffering a few initial frustrations. In concrete terms, this means, for instance, that the client and counsellor should set the date of the next meeting, rather than leave the client to make an appointment. Experience of guidance for the long-term unemployed has shown that the longer unemployment has continued, the more people need an outside support person who can encourage them to move on from one stage to the next, and who sticks with them through setbacks until they can feel they are on firmer ground. On the other hand, some people may then face 'withdrawal problems': the threshold to entering working life is too high, and the client fails to make the transition from guidance to independence, starting instead to go "from one course to the next".

Continuity and self-motivation call for a correct and realistic setting of goals, with the guidance process progressing via part-goals. Instead of facing goals that are too ambitious and the ensuing repeated failures, clients learn to assess themselves and their abilities and to set realistic targets. Teaching people to rely on their own initiative requires matters to be handled in a down-to-earth way, finding out exactly what a planned goal means in practice and what the next step towards it would be. In practice, progress can be plotted concretely by keeping a diary on agreed aspects, so that it is possible to return to them later (cf. the training and jobsearch plan). In the same way, the progress of the process from one goal to the next can also be assessed.

In the case of some groups, the guidance process starts with a thorough introduction to the rules and conventions of society and working life, during which the client gradually learns to cope independently. Lack of initiative is particularly common in people who have been institutionalised for a long time, e.g. in hospital or prison.

After a life of daily schedules planned by others, it may be difficult to take charge of planning your own life. In such cases, personal guidance, with an initial focus on dealing with everyday affairs, should be started before the clients leave the institution. Although activities planned to meet the special needs of the target group may be provided initially, the long-term aim should be to find a way of including these clients in 'normal' services available to all, which they can then use as appropriate. The danger in providing special services is that a gap may form between them and other services, meaning that clients do not adjust to normal services. Since mental problems, for instance, may often involve difficulties in interacting with others, it is important for guidance to keep clear of the world of care/institutions and encourage people to learn social skills.

In guidance services for the disabled, it is considered important for progress towards improving vocational skills to be made gradually. The transition from care/institutionalisation to 'normal' society requires motivation and initiative from those concerned, but they must also be ensured of adequate support. When rehabilitation patients take part in trainee work outside the rehabilitation organisation, and thus take a step closer to the open labour market, a support person teaches them the job and shows by his or her own example how to be part of a work community. This induction model has been used at Laptuote. Because clients have the support of the people who instruct them in the work, employers are more favourably disposed towards co-operation. Another aim of trainee work is to reduce employer resistance to hiring applicants in danger of exclusion for 'real jobs'.

In order to support clients and group members, the process may include reach-out activities aimed at maintaining contacts and encouraging continued participation. Reach-out activities may include phone calls, correspondence by mail or home visits - as, for example, at the Näsinkulma club-house, where contacts with absent members are maintained by both the staff and other members of the club. The aim here is to show clients that someone cares about them and that their well-being is important.

If the motivation and initiative of a target group is assessed as high, guidance services may also rely on rapid processes encouraging participants to take action by giving them a model of goal-oriented and determined work. In an employment project for women in Espoo, this is done during three weeks of group guidance, when an individual action plan for finding work is drawn up for each participant. At best, the guidance includes systematic follow-up on these plans, so that clients can be given further support where needed and encouraged to struggle through any difficulties they may encounter.

Where first-generation immigrants are concerned, language skill tests have been introduced as a means of further ensuring that the training and jobsearch plans drawn up and the goals set are realistic. A Finnish language test was set for a target group in an immigrants' employment and training project before the actual course started, and those who attained a certain minimum level then took part in the course. This makes participation in group guidance easier for the students, which in turn improves their motivation, but above all it provides more motivation for setting training and jobsearch goals, as the jobseeker knows he has the language skills needed to carry out his plans. The immigrants whose language skills were as yet inadequate for working life or vocational studies were referred to language courses suited to their individual level.

CONCLUSIONS

According to this study, the key features of guidance services for groups in danger of exclusion from the labour market are client-orientation, a holistic approach to services, continuity, and co-operation. As the need for guidance varies, depending on the client group, it is important for guidance and counselling to be based on an assessment of the client's own life situation, skills and wishes, and for goals to be set accordingly.

Successful guidance services require that client's special needs are taken into account in flexible solutions, and that clients can feel they will achieve something with the help of guidance. In the long term and in a wider perspective, another aim is to influence the attitudes of employers and other social actors towards the groups in danger of exclusion, who are experiencing problems in entering the labour market.

Guidance services in the light of the study

Generally speaking, Finland is felt to offer a great variety of different guidance, rehabilitation and support services for marginal groups; in addition to various projects, the public service system is accessible to everyone in principle, so access to guidance services is not considered a problem. The idea is that clients will apply for services on their own initiative or, if necessary, that they can easily be identified and contacted in person using official registers, especially if certain sanctions are imposed. As the number of long-term unemployed and others in danger of exclusion has grown rapidly in recent years, there has been talk of the 'stick or carrot' principle. In practice, public services now involve rather more coercion than before.

Activation measures do not necessarily focus on those in the weakest position on the labour market or those already excluded; instead, they focus on selected target groups. The shortcomings of the public services available are, in fact, often evident in the factors which are particularly crucial for those at risk of exclusion: they offer mass solutions instead of a holistic approach and individually tailored approaches.

One of the key aspects of guidance and counselling services is that they should be voluntary. This voluntary character is fundamental to the client's own desire to seek change and to find the motivation to move forward in the process. Depending on the person's background, the degree of initiative in seeking out services varies, but an increasing lack of initiative is particularly characteristic of those who have been outside working life for a long time. This means that if the initiative of people who have become used to a passive lifestyle and are in danger of exclusion is to be relied on, information on services must be very readily available, and access to services must be equally easy. This is not usually enough on its own, however, and personal motivation is needed before people can be made to take action. Some clients are very happy that they have been contacted and invited to an interview to map out their situation.

One of the aims of the services studied here was to improve their chosen target group's working skills and access to jobs or training. In this sense, the merits of guidance services arranged in project form were that they were innovative, developed and implemented individual flexible solutions and co-operated successfully with various authorities and private bodies. Projects have often amassed considerable expertise on their target groups which may be hard to find elsewhere, a factor which emphasises the importance of co-operation. In some cases, the good results achieved have led to continued funding, but it is still a common problem for projects that there is uncertainty about whether the good practices and operating models developed can continue. In this context, the Provincial State Office of southern Finland is one body that has started up a mainstreaming project, aimed both at helping those who have already worked in a project to make their new operating practices part of normal operations, and at helping those who have not yet been involved in such projects to skip this stage altogether and develop their operations in other ways, without needing an intermediate phase.

The problems of short-term funding also apply to guidance and support services planned as permanent services but dependent on funding from an external source which must be applied for separately each year. The uncertainty of such funding, and thus of continuity, inevitably influences the planning, development and implementation of operations. Thus the shortage of resources influences key factors for the target group, such as continuity of the counsellor-client relationship, the duration of guidance, and - as projects are usually only able to offer services to a strictly limited target group - the number of people admitted to services. On the other hand, shortage of resources does not only affect private bodies or guidance services arranged in the form of projects; in fact, the municipalities, which are required to provide services for their inhabitants, are beset by financial difficulties and tend to cut costs specifically in services designed to prevent exclusion.

Irrespective of how guidance and counselling services are arranged, the collection and analysis of feedback and monitoring of operations should be part of established practice. In this way, the information needed for assessment and development can be gathered on the effectiveness of the various methods used. At the same time, this material will help convince social policy-makers and funding bodies that such investments are worthwhile. In the services studied hitherto, client feedback has often been collected rather haphazardly, and monitoring systems are still not operating, partly because the projects concerned are so new. Ideally, a systematic model should be created for monitoring in the future, a model which would demonstrate both the effectiveness of operations and provide information on clients' further guidance needs.

Need for collaboration

The study included a survey of expert opinions on what the present-day labour market demands from employees. A general trend in all sectors is that there is more need for multi-skilling as a result of the changing nature both of jobs and of employment relationships. Coping with a job first of all requires a certain basic vocational competence in the field in question, but in addition, employers appreciate multi-skilling across vocational boundaries (Viinamäki 1995). Qualifications such as IT skills and languages are taking on increasing importance as recruitment criteria in more and more sectors. Other qualifications of general interest include both the capacity for independent work and teamwork skills, which means that both initiative and social skills are rated highly. Employers also require employees to show efficiency, flexibility regarding both working hours and the work they are willing to do, and learning ability, which ensures they are able to learn new things.

In addition to good health, the question of age also came up; it seems that employers recruiting new employees consider people of only 40-50 to be too old, unless the job calls for great expertise. Ageism is not, in fact, based exclusively on health, but rather derives from employers' attitudes. The main thing from the employer's point of view is that the investment in a new employee does not exceed the benefits gained, and this aspect takes on extra prominence where ageing or disabled workers are concerned. In the case of immigrants, access to the Finnish labour market requires Finnish language skills and cultural competence, i.e. successful adaptation to Finnish working life, regardless of the type of job looked for.

General recruitment requirements are the same for all jobseekers. Although individuals and occupations differ, the general requirements of the labour market are also the framework within which marginal groups have to operate in looking for work, and thus they also make the framework of vocational guidance for these groups. Contacts between the various guidance, advice and counselling services and employers and trade unions helps keep information on the needs and demands of individual occupations and working life in general up to date. Contacts between guidance services and working life are also necessary for securing places for trainees and 'transitional stage' jobs. At best, these contacts afford a means of disproving common prejudices, thus improving the target group's employment potential. All in all, producers of guidance and counselling services should collaborate closely with the labour market from the planning of operations onwards.

One way of improving the situation of groups at risk of labour market exclusion is to encourage them to participate in training. The barrier to entering training has, however, proved extremely high in the case of people who have only a basic education, or those who finished their education a long time ago. This means that, for many people, it is essential that they learn study skills first, before they can be expected to cope with vocational training. In such cases, guidance should focus not only on finding the appropriate type of training, but on how the training can be facilitated. Training is also required to match the needs of working life, and this calls for close collaboration between employers and training organisations. Compared with their European counterparts, Finnish employers have very little responsibility for training; employers here are used to getting personnel already trained. Highly practical training carried out in close co-operation with future employers is one way of inspiring people who would otherwise be reluctant to 'go back to school' to improve their vocational qualifications, as they can see that more training is vital for their future employment.

The construction of various co-operation networks is crucial for the efficient functioning of guidance services. Collaboration with and between different authorities has been found to produce results in many areas. The *Vire* project is an example of co-operation between the public service system and the third sector, where the target group and the service provider collaborated on the project from the outset. When clients are directly involved in planning activities for themselves, it inspires motivation and commitment. Where rehabilitation patients are concerned, flexible co-operation has been achieved between the organisations for which the patient is a client - in practice, the social services and health care, the labour administration and the Social Insurance Institution authorities. Co-operation can basically comprise collaboration teams for different administrative sectors which focus on the situation of the client group on a general level, but should also be extended to the level of the clients themselves. At Laptuote, for instance, multi-vocational support groups have been set up for clients; these provide support and monitor the individual client's achievement of personal targets.

The public sector's role in 'guaranteeing' services - and the labour administration's role as the authority which directs training and provides information on it - are still considered important by many. It is believed that the problem of a highly specialised public service system is that the excluded fall between the different services and their problems are regarded from a very narrow point of view, without an authority to take overall responsibility. Because the people who are in the greatest danger of exclusion from the labour market often have a number of different problems, producing services for them requires collaboration across administrative boundaries. The challenge for these services is to achieve a flexible and holistic approach, including collaboration with other services relevant to the client. It should also be ensured that guidance and counselling services are made available in good time, before the exclusion process goes too far, as it is always much more difficult to integrate people into the labour market if last-resort action is needed.

Need for lifelong guidance

Huge changes have taken place in working life in a fairly short time, and these affect vocational structures, numbers of potential employees, and the skills and expertise required on the labour market. Because job definitions and occupations have also changed, these skills and expertise are now different from before. The nature of employment relationships is also different, with 'permanent' temporary jobs, fixed-term contracts and other atypical employment relationships becoming increasingly widespread during the 1990s (Suikkanen et al. 1996, 143). A year-round, full-time employment relationship has been replaced by much more uncertain employment relationships of varying duration, alongside short - and also long - absences from salaried employment. In this situation, the traditional way of constructing an occupational identity for oneself loses all meaning, and employees and jobseekers alike must redefine their role in the labour market.

Rapid labour market changes mean that employees and jobseekers have to learn new things all the time in order to keep up. Lifelong learning has become a key principle in coping with change: the need for retraining, and further and supplementary training is constant. Consequently, the need for vocational guidance and training advice continues throughout people's lives, too. The need for lifelong guidance will continue to grow in many labour market groups as they struggle to cope in an increasingly complex labour market, so it is important to offer a variety of guidance services to meet the special needs of different target groups and to ensure access to services.

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CHAPTER SIX

ACCESS TO VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

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This chapter is based on research conducted by the Project Co-ordinator in the Czech Republic in April 1998 and reports from the Czech project team, headed by Ing. Robert Troška and comprising former Deputy Ing. Vavrinec Fójcik (Representative for the Polish Community), Ing. D Machácková, Dr Lenka Siñorová and PhDr Miroslav Kostka.

SOCIAL EXCLUSION IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

There is a serious shortage of statistics available on social exclusion in general, particularly on the numbers of ethnic minorities and of disabled people. Officials are aware of this and the situation can be expected to change. Nevertheless, some general trends can be observed. Three of the groups which can be identified as at risk of social exclusion are the Roma; women; and disabled people.

The Roma

At the end of the Austro-Hungarian empire, the emerging Czech state was extremely heterogeneous. About one-third of the population was ethnic German, but the democratic balance was maintained until 1938. On the coming of the communist state, civic life was almost obliterated and only four ethnic minorities were recognised in law: Polish, German, Hungarian and Ukrainian. These were not and are not immigrants, but they wish to maintain their ancestral language and culture, while also speaking Czech and taking part fully in civic and political life.

There was a further minority: the Roma people. They were forced in the 1950s to settle, principally on housing estates, and dispersed such that - though they were not officially recognised as an ethnic minority - no district should have as many as 5% of Romany inhabitants. Like the rest of the population, they were forbidden to form their own associations. Although the motive was forced assimilation (which applied to all minorities though to a lesser extent), the effect of this policy was to force the Roma into a number of ghettos.

Once democracy was restored in 1989 the Roma were granted their wish to be recognised as a national minority and the legislation forbidding them to travel has been repealed (although after such long settlement it is not thought likely that many will re-adopt this way of life).

It is very difficult to obtain coherent statistics on the Roma. Ethnic statistics are not collected on an ongoing basis, but from contacts with the Roma communities it is estimated by the Council for National Minorities (see below) that there are between

200,000 and 220,000 Romanies out of a total Czech population of 10 million[31]. The Inter-Ministerial Commission on the Roma Community (see below), on the other hand, places the range between 170,000 and 250,000. Between 50,000 and 70,000 are thought to have moved in from Slovakia It is likely that Roma people have entered the Czech Republic from other parts of Eastern Europe too. Since the separation from Slovakia, all the minorities together constitute perhaps 6 per cent of the population, but only the Polish minority is geographically concentrated, in Silesia.

Until late 1989 there was no unemployment in the Czech Republic - although under-employment existed, it was illegal to be unemployed. Since almost all enterprises were owned by the state it was possible artificially to maintain a number of unnecessary jobs. There has been, therefore, no experience on which to draw in dealing with the current situation, in which 5% overall are unemployed. This is low by EU standards, but reaches 10% in the North and East of the country, and constitutes a major psychological and political problem. Further unemployment is expected now that recruitment to the public services has largely ceased; in addition the restructuring and modernisation of the industrial sector and probable bankruptcies among inefficient businesses could mean thousands of job losses in the next few years.

Unemployment is also uneven in its distribution. Probably 25% overall of all unemployed are Roma (this is attested to be the case in Brno, the second largest town in the Czech Republic), and the rate is higher in areas of high unemployment, where many Romanies live. The majority of Roma are, therefore, unemployed. Other issues (highlighted by the Roma representative to the Inter-Ministerial Commission on the Roma Community) are education and housing. Again, no precise figures appear to be available or even known.

Unlike the United Kingdom Romanies, who are largely illiterate, there is a high literacy rate among the Czech Roma adults. The average life expectancy for the Roma is around 10 years below the average for the Czech Republic. This is the same gap as is found between wealthy and poor areas in Glasgow, for example, and compares favourably with the 30-year gap between the Romanies in the United Kingdom and average life expectancy. If unemployment in the Czech Republic rises, however, and continues to fall disproportionately upon the Roma, the gap is likely to increase there also. Unusually, life expectancy for women is lower than that for men[32], no doubt because they have a higher than average number of children.

There are several reasons for the high unemployment among the Roma. They are particularly liable to be excluded from the changing labour market with the decrease in the number of manual jobs, because they generally have low educational qualifications and skills. Despite having equal access to education, Romany cultural attitudes concerning the value of formal education are said to differ from those of most Czechs. They are also demotivated from finding paid employment by the system of social assistance: as in some other European states, the lowest wage is almost the same as social benefits. The biggest problem for the Roma, however, is skin colour: they suffer greatly from prejudice and stereotyping. Despite some examples of good practice, there are people in the Czech Republic who discriminate against Roma seeking employment.

In the multitude of changes since 1989 the problems faced by the Roma were not initially prioritised. An additional problem arose on the break-up of Czechoslovakia.

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[31] Other minorities include Slovak (around 300,000), Polish (around 60,000), German (around 50,000) and Hungarian/Ukrainian (around 10,000) but these are long settled, and the numbers of Polish and German people who can be regarded as 'minorities' are decreasing. There are also refugees (source: Ing Vavrinec Fójcik, former Deputy, April 1998).

[32] Source: Mr Milan Šamko, Roma social worker, interviewed April 1998

People already living in the territory of the new Czech Republic automatically became Czech citizens, but there were problems for the Roma already in the Czech Republic who did not have up-to-date identity papers showing their current address. The main problem, however, was those born in the Slovakian part of the region or who migrated from Slovakia. Many of these neither knew how to apply for citizenship nor could afford to pay for registration, though in one region a charity helped them to apply and set up a fund. Problems over citizenship are among those highlighted by the Inter-Ministerial Commission on the Roma Community.

In February 1994, an appendix to a Government Edict, *Concept: governmental approach to the questions of national minorities in the Czech Republic*, guaranteed members of national minorities 'the right to express, preserve and develop their national identity on the basis of their free individual choice'. This was followed in May by the establishment of the Council for Nationalities, an 'advisory, initiating and co-ordinating body of the Government for matters of Government policy toward members of the national minorities in the Czech Republic' (Appendix to the Government edict dated May 11, 1994, no. 259). Its main function is to co-ordinate solutions to problems that lie within the remit of several different ministries and to act as a 'watchdog'. The Chair is a member of the government, and appoints the Vice-Chair and other Council members. The latter are drawn from members of the various national minorities[33]; representatives of Ministries; a representative from the Parliamentary Chamber of Deputies; and one from the Office of the President of the Republic. There is a paid secretariat.

The definition of 'national minority', however, immediately poses a problem for those coming from Slovakia, whose exodus began in August 1997 (after the legislation was drawn up). A national minority is a community of persons who hold all of the following characteristics:

1 live permanently in and are citizens of the Czech Republic
2 share ethnic, cultural and language characteristics different from the majority of the state's population
3 express a mutual wish to be considered as a national minority in the interests of preserving and developing their own identity, cultural traditions and mother tongue
4 have a long-term, solid and permanent relationship with the society living on the territory of the Czech Republic

Clearly numbers 1 and 4 present difficulties for many of the Roma, including those previously settled in what is now the Czech Republic who could not present current identity papers. Those who qualify on all counts - who do include many if not all the Roma - have the guaranteed right to:

1 develop their own culture, helped by contributions from the state budget
2 distribute and use information in their mother tongue, again with state financial aid
3 associate in their own national associations and political parties, with state co-financing[34]
4 be educated in their mother tongue both within the state and private education systems, with state funding in the public system
5 use their mother tongue in public and in official relations, including during criminal proceedings

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[33] Representation is based on the proportions recorded in the last census. There are 3 Roma, 3 Slovak, 2 Polish, 2 German, 1 Hungarian and 1 Ukrainian representatives. These together outnumber the state representatives, which members of the Inter-Ministerial Commission on the Roma Community felt would prevent discrimination against minorities.

[34] The Ministry of the Interior records Civil Associations, political parties and political movements established by state-recognised National Minorities. The current figures include 74 Romany Civil Associations and 6 political parties/movements.

6 take part in official discussions relating to national minorities, via the Council for National Minorities or other bodies subsequently instituted.

Of a rather different nature is the Sub-Committee for Nationalities and Ethnic Groups of the Chamber of Deputies. Membership on all sub-committees is voluntary. In this case there are 13 members, from all the political parties save the Communists and the fascist far right. Meetings are regularly attended by representatives of minority nationalities, who sometimes outnumber the deputies. The most important objective of the committee is to create a platform for discussion between Deputies and members of minorities and enhance peaceful co-operation and co-existence, while respecting cultural and ethnic differences. The Sub-Committee drafts relevant laws, invites government representatives to comment on their own activities in this field and ensures that minority representatives receive all relevant parliamentary documentation. Although members deny reports by Romany asylum-seekers in other European countries that they had suffered persecution and oppression in the Czech Republic, and point out that there are examples of good co-existence between the Roma (and other 'black') people and 'whites' (one city has a Roma mayor, another a 'black' mayor), they freely acknowledge that the Roma are the only ethnic group to suffer discrimination and that their situation necessitates great improvement.

Other important actions have been taken. For example, in March 1997 the Human Rights Committee of the Czech Chamber of Deputies held a seminar in Parliament on the subject of protecting minority rights. Between March and August 1997, the Council for Nationalities prepared material on the Romany situation and made recommendations to improve their lot. These were accepted by Parliament on the third reading. Concrete measures to be implemented include the inclusion in schools with a big Roma minority of a Roma assistant. It will be cities and regions that will have the biggest responsibility: for example, they can employ the Roma on public works. Consultation has taken place with Roma representatives and some actions are now being initiated by the Roma themselves, such as meetings with mayors and members of parliament.

The Inter-Ministerial Commission on the Roma Community was set up by statute in October 1997 and 'advises, initiates and co-ordinates the policy of the Czech government regarding the status of Romas in Czech society'. The Commission is located within the Government Office of the Czech Republic. It is chaired by a Minister appointed by the Czech government (currently the Minister without Portfolio[35]) and includes an Executive Vice-Chair (who is a salaried employee of the Czech Government Office), the Deputy Ministers of Finance, Education, Youth and Sports, the Interior, Labour and Social Affairs, Culture, Foreign Affairs, Industry and Business, Defence, Justice and Regional Development, and at least six representatives of the Roma community. It thus consists principally of Deputies and Roma representatives, working on an expenses-only basis. It is supported by a Commission Office, staffed by employees of the Czech Government Office. The Executive Vice-Chair and at least three of the staff are currently Roma, but this is not a requirement laid down in the Founding Statute.

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[35] The Minister without Portfolio heads several advisory bodies on inter-ministerial issues.

The tasks to be performed are to:

- review draft government measures which concern the Roma
- evaluate the effectiveness of official measures
- suggest allocation of special funds for the Roma in order to better their condition and once granted control such funds and monitor the effectiveness of the resulting projects
- collect data on an ongoing basis on conditions among the Roma and produce annual reports
- give information to the Roma concerning available state assistance
- co-operate with Roma and pro-Roma organisations to generate projects to better their community

At government level there is evidence of good will towards the Roma, and the formation of such a large number of Roma civic associations is surely a sign of activity which gainsays the stereotyped notion that the Roma 'live for the moment' and take no thought for the future. Goodwill, however, needs to be matched by adequate funding, the Czech economy is not in good shape and there are projects for other disadvantaged groups, notably the disabled, which require stable and increased funding. Cost-effective solutions will be needed, and it is to be hoped that membership of the European Union and access to regional and social funds will be helpful.

Efforts by the Roma to help themselves are not always immediately successful. For example, some of the Roma established an international foundation to establish a social work course for Roma adults. The course was submitted for approval to the Ministries of Education and of Labour and Social Affairs, but it was refused accreditation. They then approached a non-governmental organisation but they too rejected the course on quality grounds. After revision the course became expensive so the Inter-Ministerial Commission on the Roma Community was asked to help. It has now been adopted by the state and will be state-funded from this year. It is expected to have a multiplier effect: it will help Roma adults to get secondary level qualifications, thus increasing their employment prospects and so making changes at the local level[36].

As noted above, the biggest problem for the Roma is that they suffer greatly from prejudice and stereotyping. Both the Sub-Committee for Nationalities and Ethnic Groups and the Roma representatives on the Inter-Ministerial Commission on the Roma Community stated that racism was the underlying problem in all economic areas of life and citizenship. All the post-communist countries are said to have xenophobic elements[37]. Racism manifests itself in a variety of ways: violence towards the Roma by criminals; the refusal of some officials to help them; discrimination against them by employers. The problem is not so much at central as at local level. Anti-racist legislation is hard to enforce, and at local level there is a tendency to 'blame the victim'[38]. It is clear that the Roma have long constituted the 'out-group' in Czech society, and are now blamed for rising crime. One rumour holds that many Roma - in particular, criminals - were paid by the Slovak government to move to the Czech Republic. The Sub-Committee denies this.

According to the Inter-Ministerial Commission, Roma society is gender equal[39]. As for their chances in the wider society, Roma men suffer more violence than Roma women, and Roma women are more successful at getting unskilled jobs. In this they are motivated by the need to gain income. The jobs they get are no worse than the men's - both men and women can expect only low-paid employment.

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[36] Source: the Inter-Ministerial Commission on the Roma Community

[37] There was little appreciation that Western European countries have the same problem until reports came back from Roma asylum seekers in the United Kingdom.

[38] Source: the Inter-Ministerial Commission on the Roma Community, April 1998

[39] This is apparently the case among the British Romany, where hierarchy is weak in the family structure in general, according to a project in Leicestershire which sends tutors to a

Disabled people

There are no statistical data on the number of disabled persons in the Czech Republic. The Ministry of Health keeps data concerning disabled persons treated in medical institutions but these represent only a small part of the total number. Therefore, it is possible to make only a qualified estimate based on the assumption that the frequency of disability in similar countries serves as a reasonable indicator. Based on this, the number of disabled persons in the Czech Republic can be estimated at roughly 1,200,000, or more than 10 per cent of the population.

Even more difficult to estimate is the number of persons affected by the different types of disability. The Report on the Situation of the Disabled and the Most Urgent Tasks to be Solved (Government Board for People with Disabilities, VVZP 202/91, Prague, January 14, 1992) submitted to the Government of the Czech Republic, specifies the following estimates:

- 60,000 visually impaired persons, including 17,000 persons with serious impairment
- 300,000 hearing impaired persons, including about 15,000 persons profoundly deaf
- 60,000 persons with speech disorders
- 1,500 deaf/blind persons
- 300,000 mentally handicapped persons
- 300,000 persons with locomotive impairments
- 530,000 diabetics, including 70,000 using insulin
- 150,000 persons affected by vascular and cerebral incidences
- 140,000 epileptics
- 100,000 mentally ill
- 200,000 psychiatric patients

These figures do not contradict the estimate of overall number of disabled persons, because the handicaps are multiple in a great number of cases.

Apart from disabilities specified above there is also a considerable number of persons affected e.g. by congenital impairments of development, serious kidney insufficiency, urinary diseases, rheumatism, oncological diseases, respiratory diseases and asthma, dermatoses, phenylketonuria, cystic fibrosis, spinal bifida, hydrocephaly, cerebroplegia, haemophilia, dispersed sclerosis, muscular dystrophia, parkinsonism, hypophysal nanism, Turner syndrome, Bechterev syndrome, etc.

It is estimated that 18% of the overall unemployed are disabled, either slightly or severely. In some ways disabled people fared better before 1989. Their social security was, in relation to the mean population, of an even higher standard than in most western countries. Disabled people also had far fewer problems with job finding than

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Romany encampment. This is a potential strength: in that project, the women and children often start by learning together and then are joined by the men once a relationship of trust has been established (source: NIACE conference, *Widening Participation for the Socially Excluded*, Leicester, March 1998).

the disabled in the West, partly thanks to the former 'production co-operatives for the disabled'. These have suffered a steep decline and have not been replaced.

On the other hand, part of the 'solution' to the 'problem' of disability was literally to segregate them from the 'healthy' population and conceal them from the public: 'People with disabilities did not fit into the "image of healthy and happy socialistic man and woman"' (Hrubý 1995: Part 2, p. 12). Czechoslovakia had probably the most extensive system of special schools in the world, in which children with even the smallest disability - missing fingers, slight hearing impairment, etc. - were placed. They were ghettos in which the disabled were literally concealed. The majority of people barely met their disabled fellow citizens at all. Seriously disabled people, as well as old people, were concentrated in large-capacity and mostly isolated social welfare institutions, even in the cases in which the creation of elementary prerequisites would have enabled them to live in their own environment. Particularly difficult was the situation of the mentally handicapped, the mentally ill and their families. The problems of disabled people were hardly publicised at all. Due to the segregation, there was no interest in the elimination of the architectural, orientation, communication and psychological barriers which make it difficult for disabled persons to live in mainstream society.

The National Plan of Measures (NPM) to Reduce the Negative Impact of Disability (Government of the Czech Republic 1993) is a system of measures intended to eliminate this segregation, to create equal opportunities for the disabled and to remove successively barriers of all types. The NPM concentrates on the creation of system prerequisites preventing the origin of new barriers and the gradual elimination of existing ones, enabling an ever-increasing number of disabled children to be admitted to mainstream schools, finding the optimum system of financing of all necessary prosthetic, compensation, rehabilitation and re-educational aids and creating a system of financing the necessary services in order to create improved provision, to enable disabled people to live in their own environment with the assistance of personal attendants, to stimulate employers to employ greater numbers of disabled workers, gradually to change the relation of the wide public to their disabled fellow citizens, etc.

The scope of the NPM is extremely broad. That, however, is essential, because even the most grandiose improvement in a single isolated field is of no significance. It is superfluous to eliminate architectural 'barriers' if disabled people do not have good quality wheelchairs, if the public has a negative attitude to them and shuts them out rather than meets them, etc. It is unnecessary to stimulate employers to employ disabled people, if the disabled are not adequately educated and qualified, if they have no adequate aids enabling them to perform their work, etc. It is of no avail to enable the integration of disabled children in the mainstream schools by legislation, if the teachers do not have a fundamental knowledge of working with disabled children, if the disabled pupil does not have the helping hand of a special pedagogue at his disposal, if healthy children as well as teachers are not educated to accept instead of rejecting disabled children, if there is no system for the development of the strong points of the disabled individual so that s/he can inspire the respect of unimpaired school fellows, etc.

The NPM is so structured as to explain briefly in every chapter the given problem and to formulate the targets in the respective field which can represent even a very distant ideal. The targets are followed by an outline of concrete measures intended to ensure the approach to this ideal as quickly and as effectively as possible. Every measure gives the institution which is to guarantee its implementation an estimate of its financial requirements, furnished in most cases by the individual ministries. If the measure is guaranteed by a non-governmental institution, the NPM can only make recommendations. The problems, however, were discussed with most institutions of this type and the measures were included in the plan on the basis of their preliminary consent. The Government authorised the Vice-chairman of the Government Board for People with Disabilities, Ing. Dusek, who is simultaneously Chairman of the Board of Representatives from the Organisations of Disabled People, to lead the appropriate negotiations with non-governmental organisations.

'Disability' is defined as a long-lasting or permanent condition which cannot be fully or significantly improved; but it is recognised that the negative consequences of these conditions can be reduced by well-considered arrangements involving the participation of society as a whole. Nevertheless, disabled people still have difficulty integrating into society, gaining employment and obtaining a secure foothold in the labour market and it will take some time before policy measures have a significant effect.

Women

The Czech Republic is far behind most EU countries in its recognition of the problem of women's status and, in particular, economic position. A comment in the Prague vocational guidance centre that children would be adversely influenced by seeing men and women on video in 'traditional' occupations was simply not understood. Once gendered statistics are available it will be interesting to see if Czech women suffer the same fate as East German women, who bore the brunt of the steep rise in unemployment after re-unification.

VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Although it is clear that the problem of unemployment generally is too large for state agencies to conduct all the vocational guidance and counselling, there are currently almost no non-profit organisations in existence, apart from a few church and charity organisations, which can supplement state provision. So the large network of state employment agencies, set up in 1991 on a model based on the British Employment Service, with input from Stevenson College, Edinburgh on the counselling aspect, still bears the major responsibility. The target groups for the vocational counselling service for clients with difficulties include the Roma, along with the long-term unemployed, women returners and people with low qualifications.

Guidance consists of individual counselling and psychological diagnostics or group counselling, which includes lectures, seminars, work exchange, counselling information programs and counselling training programs. There is a computerised information system and guidance includes direction towards education and training as well as employment. Counselling emphasises the personal and social value of employment in contrast with life on state benefits.

There are, however, no special facilities or group sessions specifically for Roma people; and since the service is not yet statutory, service directors can choose to allocate the minimum amount of resources to the counselling service. Only one-third of all services have made substantial progress in this area but the quality and the practices are very variable.

Guidance for disabled people

Special arrangements for disabled people since 1989 include guidance and lifelong education, beginning as soon as the disability is recognised. In many cases, then, the first stage of guidance is dedicated to the families of disabled children, followed by school education and work preparation. Counselling is provided by teams of specialists, which include psychologists, doctors, lawyers, special pedagogues, social workers etc., and, very importantly, successfully integrated disabled people. The guidance is provided mainly by non-governmental organisations: state and private special pedagogical centres; centres of medical rehabilitation; civil associations of disabled people, which are aimed at legal guidance, technical aid, early care etc.; and rehabilitative re-qualification centres.

Work rehabilitation, which is continuous care aimed at reintegrating disabled people into the labour market, plays an important role in the process of education. It includes vocational guidance and counselling; work placement preparation; employment placement; and the creation of suitable work conditions for disabled people.

The most successful programmes of the state vocational guidance and counselling centres have been those for newly-unemployed or never employed disabled people, aimed at the prevention of long-term unemployment. The emphasis is on re-socialisation, motivation, qualification and work and social integration.

As well as vocational guidance and counselling, services can offer financial help, re-qualification, subsidies to employers to create new jobs, wage subsidies and employer counselling.

As in many other countries the state vocational guidance services are not highly regarded. Many people do not bother to register with them since they are thought to be ineffective; they lack good relationships with social partners, including employers; they are too centralised and react slowly to regional problems, and there are too few of them. The Prague Employment Service has only one office for a total population of 1.5 million and can deal with only a very small percentage of the unemployed

(January 1998, 96 clients against 6,544 registered unemployed; February, 79 clients against 7041 registered unemployed). There was until recently no regional government in the Czech Republic, but the problems are recognised by government and laws have been prepared which should ameliorate the situation.

From 1st January 1998 there have been 14 regions. There is an emphasis on the use of social workers to assist ex-offenders and young people with problems; social assistance for the Roma; and careers officers for schools. It is also recognised that vocational guidance and counselling is inadequate without job creation, and this is under discussion. It has been suggested that employers must recruit a proportion of their workforce from the Roma and the disabled, or that tax concessions be given as incentive to do so, or that special programmes such as sheltered workshops be set up out of state funding.

By and large, official state policies help to improve the position of the excluded on the labour market only formally and passively. Despite the welcome creation of the state vocational guidance service, the state does not facilitate the work of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) working with people at risk of social exclusion; nor does it give sufficient incentives to employers to give special consideration to such groups. In this respect, while recognising their heterogeneity, it can be said that all groups of excluded citizens are equal on the labour market. A potentially useful development, however, is the creation of Higher Territorial Self-Governing Units (Regions) to which certain powers will be devolved.

RECOMMENDATIONS

DISABLED PEOPLE

Many of these recommendations are already contained in the NPM but are thought worth highlighting here.

The need for accurate information

More accurate data are required for a number of reasons: for an estimate of the financial requirements of prepared legislative measures, for the planning of the networks of advisory centres, for schools, for the discussions on the financing of technical aids, etc. The ideal target is a computerised information system containing voluntarily furnished data on disabled persons. As a start for the generation of such an information system the NPM (measure 2e) proposes the elaboration of a feasibility study of the ways to the achievement of the specified ideal target. In the first phase the databases generated by the individual organisations of the disabled on the basis of voluntarily furnished data of their members will be of considerable significance. The associations willing to respect the recommended rules will be granted a financial contribution to cover the costs of establishment or administration of such databases by the Ministries (the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and the Ministry of Health) granting subsidies to civic associations of the disabled. In the final phase, however, the data on disabled persons must be kept and maintained by a state institution which will ensure that the collected data will be administered in accordance with the laws which are under preparation at present.

Classification of disabilities and social security

The Czech legal system does not give any comprehensive definition of disability: it is interested only in ascertaining the extent of the person's ability to work. It defines the person with reduced working ability and the seriously disabled person with reduced working ability. There are persons drawing partial and full invalidity pensions, but although every beneficiary of a partial invalidity pension has reduced working ability, not every person with reduced working ability is the beneficiary of such a pension. Apart from that there are categories of seriously disabled persons who do not have reduced working ability, while at the same time some people with minimal disability are considered as having reduced working ability. A principal requirement of the NPM (measure 2b), consequently, is the introduction of a new classification of disabilities similar to that in many other states which would show also the seriousness of the disability concerned - but it has proved impossible to create a uniform classification for all purposes.

Counselling and social rehabilitation

At the moment of origin of disability the disabled person or his/her parents are entirely helpless and, moreover, in a state of deep psychic depression. They need immediate and effective assistance. Advisory teams will work in counselling centres. As the attendance at these centres will be frequent, they must be easily accessible. Therefore, their establishment in regions is proposed.

Organisations of the disabled will participate actively in these advisory services, because the disabled persons themselves or their parents have the greatest experience of disability. The state will "buy" the services from the associations of the disabled through subsidies to the advisory projects of the individual associations. It must be assessed, whether this method of financing affords the optimum solution (NPM measure 4a).

It is also necessary to ensure that the standard of advisory services in the whole republic satisfies a certain national standard. Therefore, it is necessary to establish a system of accreditation. The advisory service includes also intensive training courses for the "new" disabled persons, which are of great significance, e.g. also because of mutual meetings and acquaintance of the individual disabled persons (NPM measures 4b and 4c).

Vocational rehabilitation, employment and sheltered jobs

There is an acute problem for employment of the children leaving special and ESN (educationally subnormal) schools. The child leaves the school and nobody knows what to do next. Integration must be ensured also in vocational schools for apprentices.

Disabled people are usually the first to be dismissed from their jobs, and it requires a specialist to find adequate jobs for disabled people (NPM measure 7a).

An Order of the Government was issued on the obligatory percentage of employment of persons with reduced working ability. So far this order has been used passively - as a certain threat to employers. Measure 7b requires use of funds raised from such penalties for an active policy of increasing the employment rate of disabled persons. Subsidies to employers have already had a stimulating effect on the employment of disabled persons and their inclusion in the NPM (measures 7c and 7d) confirms that the state has decided to continue this policy.

It is a matter of course in other countries that if there are several tenderers in public procurement procedure offering the same conditions, the tenderer who employs a higher percentage of disabled persons is preferred and awarded the contract. The incorporation of this condition in the public procurement rules which are under preparation should not be any problem and its practical aspect would be significant (NPM measure 7e).

If adults become disabled, it is necessary to rehabilitate them, so that they can perform their initial employment, or should it be impossible this, to find a type of employment which they can perform and which is in demand on the labour market, and to retrain them for this work. Vocational rehabilitation is a highly exacting affair and must be executed in specialised barrier-free centres provided both with qualified specialists and with the possibilities for the rehabilitated individual to try out various types of work. There are no such centres in the Czech Republic so far, but the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs is preparing them (NPM measure 7g).

There is no point giving employers incentives to employ disabled people if they are not adequately educated or qualified. One aim is to ensure that every disabled person can be 'assessed by a team of experts which will suggest an individual method of development of his/her skills and abilities and so ensure his/her right to education in the broader meaning of the term' (Government of the Czech Republic 1993: 16). The optimum result of vocational training and rehabilitation is 'the full insertion of disabled people on the free labour market', but failing that they should have access to specially created jobs or sheltered workshops (ibid. p. 17).

There is, however, a shortage of qualified professionals and this matter needs to be addressed.

Elimination of barriers

Payment for the costs of apprentice training (by the Ministry of the Economy and the Ministry of Education, Youth and Physical Training) is a considerable problem, and the payment of the costs of disabled apprentice training a doubly difficult problem. A solution to this problem is required (NPM measure 6n).

Measures 8i) and 8j) are concerned with the elimination of communication and information barriers for the deaf. Writing telephones make it possible for deaf people to use the telephone. A number of telecommunication companies have elaborated organisational measures of how to make this service best accessible for the deaf (most notably, probably, by the MINITEL system in France, which serves not only the deaf, but enables data transmission also for other users which makes the service to disabled people economically more reasonable). The TELETEXT system enables a technically simple broadcasting of so-called closed captions for the hearing impaired. The captions appear only when page 888 of the Telext has been activated, as a result of which they do not disturb the spectators who do not want them. The meaning of Measure 8j) is to make the offer of this service one of the supporting conditions for the granting of new TV licences.

Preparation of specialists for work with disabled persons

NPM measure 13b requires the creation of prerequisites for disabled persons to become teachers and instructors of other disabled persons. Disabled children need them urgently as their identification models.

The education of the public

Although this is a long-term task, it should not be neglected. 'Disability' is often more a matter of attitudes towards it than a condition which is inherently disabling.

ALL PEOPLE AT RISK OF SOCIAL EXCLUSION

- Interministerial cooperation and cooperation between government ministries and other authorities are necessary to make and oversee the implementation of policies to overcome social exclusion.
- Active labour market policies, such as the provision of adult vocational guidance and counselling services, should supplement passive measures to suppport those who are not yet equipped for the labour market.
- Guidance for people at risk of social exclusion should be free and accessible. This is not currently the case. State vocational guidance services, for example, need to be increased in number and located in areas that are easily accessed by people with low confidence and few financial resources.
- For those in prison, vocational guidance should begin before release.
- Special attention should be paid to young people leaving children's homes.
- Voluntary sector services are more likely to be able to overcome the mistrust that many people have in the authorities.
- There is a shortage of qualified guidance professionals, which may become more urgent if unemployment continues to rise. This is therefore a matter of immediate concern.
- There is a need for more inservice training, especially on matters of access and social exclusion. This will become more important if the voluntary sector takes on the task of providing grassroots guidance services.
- Taken-for-granted assumptions about the gender-stereotyping of jobs need to be examined.

- The inclusion of special courses and groupwork for, for example, Roma and women, might prove more beneficial than the 'mixed' courses which are the only ones currently available.
- The quality and availability of vocational training needs to be improved.
- Generic publicity on the nature and availability of vocational guidance is needed.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The Czech Republic is in some respects a 'new' state and its concern to eradicate the heritage of its post-war past has led it to examine closely the problems of social exclusion, problems which existed before 1989 but were hidden from view. Two important target groups which have elicited this attention are the Roma and the disabled. Other groups worthy of attention are ex-offenders, homeless people, young people leaving children's homes and women.

We recognise that financial considerations are an important barrier to full implementation of our recommendations for guidance provision; and the Czech Republic is by no means alone in Europe in its paucity of such provision. Nevertheless the problems of unemployment and social exclusion themselves can constitute a heavy burden on state and national resources. If adult vocational guidance and counselling can help to guide people towards fulfilling employment or self-employment, it is surely worth the investment.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSIONS

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> 'Social exclusion refers to the structures and processes which exclude persons and groups from full participation in society ... (It) can be succinctly described as cumulative marginalisation: from production (unemployment), from consumption (income poverty), from social networks (community, family, neighbours), from decision-making and from an adequate quality of life ... It is not just about lack of money, but may also be about isolation, lack of work, lack of educational opportunities and discrimination' (Irish national report, page 98 of this volume).

Measuring the extent of social exclusion is difficult. The availability of statistics is not uniform among the participating member states and each presents difficulties of various kinds. For example, Ireland has little statistical data on disability; the United Kingdom has extensive statistical datasets in many areas but changing definitions of categories make it difficult to evaluate long-term trends. Many individuals fall into more than one category. Nevertheless it is possible to see which groups are most at risk of social exclusion.

It is commonly, and correctly, acknowledged that the disabled and the long-term unemployed (especially older men) are at risk of social exclusion. The longer people remain unemployed, the less their chances of obtaining jobs. The number of disabled jobseekers is increasing in Finland and the Italian research found that disability of all types is increasing. All the European Partners included these two groups among their target groups. There are, however, many other groups at risk, including some who are currently employed, and especially those on low pay, in precarious employment and older workers. Other groups affected by structural change are women returners, immigrants, refugees and ethnic minorities. Among the last three groups, refugees (and asylum-seekers in certain countries) are at particular risk of social exclusion. This is illustrated by Interview 2 in Case Study no. 2, CILO of Chivasso. Even in Finland, which has a very small percentage of foreigners and no official rhetoric against refugees (or asylum-seekers), their unemployment rate in 1995 was 70 per cent, against around 50 per cent for foreigners in general and 17 per cent for the population in general.

At even greater risk of social exclusion - indeed, most are socially excluded, not merely at risk - are small outsider groups such as Travellers in Ireland and Romany and Irish Travellers in the United Kingdom. These are one of the main groups living in extreme poverty, with poor living conditions and health, low life expectancy, mainly illiterate and facing discrimination at all levels. All Partners included minorities of various kinds as worthy of special attention.

Ex-offenders find extreme difficulties accessing employment and often fall into the ranks of the homeless, who share many of the disadvantages of Travellers and the Romany. Both the Italian and British researchers chose to include case studies which target the homeless and people in housing need: one of these, the Fondazione San Carlo (case study no. 8 and see also p. 237 for the Forum movement), provides temporary accommodation. Services which target offenders or ex-offenders were included by all the researchers: of particular interest is the Valtti Project in Finland (case study no. 44).

All four European Partners focused on women: in Ireland and Italy they suffer greater unemployment than men, and female unemployment in Finland has begun to increase faster than male; and the actual numbers unemployed (in all countries, including the United Kingdom where at all ages women suffer less unemployment than men according to LFS figures) may be greater than even these if discouraged workers are taken into account. Everywhere in the EU, employed women earn less than men, even on a pro rata basis, that is, taking into account hours worked, and are disproportionately employed in low-paid sectors and at low levels of work. A particular barrier for women with dependent children, especially in Ireland, where provision is very poor, and the United Kingdom, where it is very expensive and provision is uneven, is the necessity to pay for childcare, including afterschool care. It is remarkable that British women have such a high rate of labour market participation, given this barrier. Women are often worse qualified than men, too, and are less likely to access training. Female lone parents in Ireland and the United Kingdom have very low rates of labour market participation and a very high incidence of poverty.

A phenomenon peculiar in our study to Italy (and which also applies to Greece) is the high rate of self-employment. Few of these are professionals or entrepreneurs: the majority are people whose work would formerly have taken place in core employing organisations but who now carry out such tasks as peripheral subcontractual work (included among 'atypical contracts' in the Italian study). The self-employed have little social protection or political representation and insufficient access to ongoing training.

In some cases whole areas are at risk: the south of Italy; the rural West of Ireland; remote parts of Scotland and other outlying areas of the United Kingdom; declining industrial areas in Northern Italy and the United Kingdom; deprived city quarters in Ireland, Italy and the United Kingdom. This last does not apply to Finland, where social housing is mixed class - a model we would advocate to policy-makers elsewhere - but the other Partners included locally-based services set up to combat this kind of exclusion.

In Ireland, the poorest nation in our survey, the major effect of social exclusion is widespread poverty. It is estimated that one-third of the population (and one-quarter of all children) live on 60 per cent or less of average disposable income. The largest group of poor households is headed by an unemployed person, followed by those headed by a full-time carer. The main groups of poor people include farmers and women working in the home as well as the disabled, retired and able-bodied unemployed. Alone in the four countries surveyed here, Ireland still has many large families and these are more prone to poverty. As in the United Kingdom, however, lone parenthood, marital breakdown and indebtedness to moneylenders lock many into a vicious cycle of poverty and despair. Indeed, one researcher has estimated that, (based on the numbers on some form of income support, 30 per cent of the British population suffer social and economic exclusion (Macfarlane 1997), even though this is a wealthier country than Ireland.

Many of the disadvantages suffered by those at risk of social exclusion cannot be tackled at the level of the individual; those at risk are:

> 'restricted by a series of handicaps which neither they, nor their families, are able to redress' (Italian national report, page 37 of this volume).

Lack of skills and low educational qualifications, however, generally increase the risk of unemployment and difficulty of labour market (re)entry. Furthermore, as the

Italian study points out, the effects of long-term unemployment include the loss of confidence and motivation; the obsolescence of skills; and the loss of labour market information through detachment from informal networks. Intervention in these areas can have a positive effect.

On the face of it, the answer for those lacking skills or qualifications is to obtain them; and given the profile given in recent years to lifelong learning, it might be thought that returning to learning would be unproblematic. In fact, this depends very much local or national circumstances.

ACCESS TO LIFELONG LEARNING

In Italy there were in the past few opportunities for lifelong learning but two recent agreements are set to develop training for the employed and those at risk of unemployment and to create continuing education centres. Funding is available to finance training for adults, including those on atypical contracts. In Ireland, on the other hand, there is a well-established National Training Authority (Fas) which, along with other state bodies such as the VECs and the Area Based Partnerships, and the voluntary and community sectors, provides for the unemployed a range of lifelong learning opportunities ranging from literacy and basic education to advanced vocational training. In addition, those unemployed for 12 months or more may enter high school or higher education institutions, full-time or part-time, while still claiming state benefits.

In Finland and the United Kingdom, comprehensive reviews of lifelong learning have taken place in the last few years. Both countries have a long history of adult liberal and informal education, although industrialisation in the United Kingdom long preceded that of Finland, and both experienced steep rises in unemployment followed by recognition of the need to increase the skills of the workforce. In Finland, however, an official lifelong learning policy began in the late 1960s (that is, about the time Finland was transformed from a rural agricultural to an urban industrialised society), and since then it has been the central plank of educational planning. A nation-wide network of adult vocational training centres was set up in the 1970s. In the late 1980s all vocational schools were obliged to organise vocational training for adults, and adult continuing education centres were instituted in all the universities, to provide continuing education, open academic education, and labour market training including, since the big rise in unemployment in the 1990s, employment training for graduates. Open university education is also provided by summer universities. In addition, there are study circle centres, private and voluntary sector providers of education/training and employer-provided training.

The provision of lifelong learning has been much more decentralised in the United Kingdom and opportunities vary between different local areas. Overall, however, there is - for those who can access it - a wide range of provision, including liberal education, Access and pre-Access courses to prepare adults aiming at university entry, courses for qualifications from basic to postgraduate, community education, skills training, inservice training, EDPs, and special programmes for labour market returners and the unemployed (of varying effectiveness in the latter case). Providers include central and local government, universities, including the Open University, colleges of further education, semi-state agencies such as the TECs/LECs, trade unions, employers, ILMs, and the voluntary and private sectors. Learning may be, for example, face-to-face, distance, open, computer-mediated or any combination of modes of learning. In Finland, the United Kingdom and elsewhere, however, actual participation in adult learning increases with socio-economic status and level of initial education. The least likely to access lifelong learning, particularly that which confers high-status qualifications, are adults at risk of social exclusion.

Since the 1980s there has been an increasing focus in many European nations on the link between education and the economy. One manifestation of this link is the merging of the Departments of Education and of Employment into a single ministry, the DfEE. Only in Finland among the member-states in this survey, however, has there been such a focus on the need to combat social exclusion, support personal development, strengthen democratic values and sustain communities and social cohesion, as well as to promote national competitiveness. The latter has been the main thrust of policy development in the United Kingdom, although both the previous and the present government include combating social exclusion (or promoting social inclusion) as aims. The previous government rightly recognised the importance of tailored courses, outreach, workplace learning and childcare, and set training targets. The present government has taken policy forward with a series of measures, such as the New Deal, which included education/training, for the unemployed under 25, the UfI, Learning Direct and other measures described in Chapter Four. It is too early to assess the effects of current policy, but the previous policy for lifelong learning was undermined by funding cuts, poor promotion of NVQs - and by lack of impartial information and guidance.

Ideally, lifelong learning should appear to its participants as a seamless web, albeit in a variety of settings and through a variety of routes. A holistic model of access to lifelong learning would include the involvement of and synergy between:

- education/training providers (schools, colleges of further education, adult and continuing education departments and colleges, institutions of higher education with a focus on non-traditional students, community education services, the voluntary sector, training organisations, etc.);
- EU, national and local economic development organisations and policy-makers;
- the workplace, including SMEs as well as large employers, and with the active involvement of trade unions;
- and the areas where people live, with special attention paid to inner cities, outlying housing estates and rural areas.

Access for disadvantaged groups would be free and the necessary supports would be given, including free childcare, travel grants, bursaries and so on and continued payment of state benefits for those with no other income. Even with such a system, however, access would prove difficult for many without full information and advice; and even then it would require specialised guidance for would-be learners to choose for themselves the most appropriate programmes for their needs, interests and future labour market benefits. Hence we would add to this 'web':

- adult vocational guidance and counselling services

The maintenance and creation of such a seamless web would depend in large part on the collection and diffusion of information between the strands outlined above: adult guidance networks, properly resourced and organised, could form the hub of such an information network.

In practice, such a seamless web does not exist, and even where an individual has discovered a suitable programme, practical barriers such as lack of finance, inadequate educational background, lack of confidence, geographical immobility, the need for childcare and the necessity to juggle study and work may impede him/her from taking up the opportunity. Some of these problems can be overcome with the help of vocational guidance; not only can clients be enabled to choose appropriate courses - and research into the outcomes of good experiences of adult learning consistently finds that learners report enhanced self-confidence and self-esteem - but they can also benefit from confidence-raising programmes. Unfortunately, if access to learning is difficult, access to guidance is even more problematic.

ACCESS TO VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE: ISSUES FOR POLICY-MAKERS

It has long been argued that something could be learned from the discontinuities characteristic of many women's careers (Lemmer 1991; Watts 1980); but a qualitative study of 77 women found that across all ages and socio-economic backgrounds, few women had ever received much career advice or guidance (Taylor and Spencer 1994). A large-scale Danish study of participation in guidance by unemployed people found that 22 per cent claimed to have received no guidance (Plant 1995). In countries with less provision than Denmark this percentage is likely to be very much higher; and our target groups are not confined only to the unemployed. Women and the long-term unemployed, especially men, have become the main target groups for vocational guidance; but in many, but by no means all, services, women form the majority of users. Ethnic minorities too are willing to use services where they exist. Ethnic majority men, including the low-paid employed, with no or low qualifications are the hardest group to access.

The provision of adult vocational guidance and counselling

Given that our proposed solution to accessing appropriate lifelong learning, especially for those at risk of social exclusion, is access to adult vocational guidance and counselling, it seems clear that the first access issue is the state of provision. This can be summarised in one sentence:

There is no universally available, statutory provision in any of the participating member-states, and to our knowledge elsewhere in the European Union, of lifelong vocational guidance and counselling that is free and accessible to all adults at risk of social exclusion.

Among the member states of the European Union, only France grants a legal entitlement to adult vocational guidance and counselling, in the form of the *bilan de compétence* (Chisholm 1997), but this does not meet the continuing needs of the socially excluded.

It might be argued that state employment services carry out such a service and since these are always locally-based they obviate the need for a separate service. In fact, there are many objections to such a proposition and clients are often unenthusiastic about the service they have received:

> 'The Public Employment Service is more difficult, more bureaucratic' (interviewee at CILO of Chivasso, case study no. 2).

A learning disabled young woman also had a poor experience of the Employment Service:

> Far from recognising that she had special needs, "they were always asking me why I didn't have a job" (interviewee at Rehab Scotland's Open Doors Café, case study no. 22).

In general it is necessary to be unemployed (though not necessarily eligible to receive state benefit, and Finland is an exception here, as shown below) to use state services, whereas social exclusion may co-exist with employment; for the registered unemployed there is a strong coercive element, since the basic function of the service is to police claimants and attempt to reduce the unemployment count rather than to point clients towards solutions that are best for them in the long term; even if such services re-train their staff and change their approach to approximate that of an empathic, holistic, client-centred service, the collective memory of the former bureaucratic, coercive and in some cases unpleasant service will take a long time to disappear.

Among the countries in this study, Finland comes closest to our ideal in its non-coercive (because voluntary for the client) state provision of guidance and counselling to the long-term unemployed and the disabled through the Employment Service (see case study 43). In addition, since 1993 the Finnish service has provided educational and vocational guidance, both individual and group, which is free not only to unemployed jobseekers but also to employed persons seeking to develop their careers or change direction. The larger offices have careers libraries and information officers. As well as specialist services for the disabled, the Employment Service tracks the labour market progress of immigrants. Nevertheless, the public services are criticised for proferring mass solutions rather than an individual, holistic approach; for concentrating on selected target groups; for increasing the amount of coercion used; and for keeping clients waiting for guidance, in some cases for months.

The United Kingdom Employment Service, through the New Deal, is moving in the direction of a more empathic service to selected groups of unemployed people, but there is still a strong coercive element in the programme framework which is necessarily absent in a true guidance service. The recent devolvement of non-coercive services to the Italian regions, through the CILOs (see case study no. 1), which moreover have a wider range of target groups than the long-term unemployed, is a very welcome and promising initiative.

Developments in policy and practice

There have been some policy developments in the provision of adult vocational guidance and counselling, most notably in Italy. Here there have been major changes since 1997 (in other words, since this research began), including the devolution to the Regions and Provinces of active labour market policies, such as the provision of adult vocational guidance. This does not mean that vocational guidance and counselling did not exist at all. Local employment agencies in certain areas developed programmes which included work placements and counselling; but the heavy involvement of the social partners in these and in the territorial agreements favours redundant workers at the expense of other groups. Much more inclusive were the job centres, such as the CILOs of Piemonte, which operate at the level of the commune. Objectives for the new national strategy include synergy, between different institutional levels, between the social partners and other economic actors, and between education/training and the local labour market. Italy, then, has leapt from a situation where vocational guidance was virtually unknown to one where it is on the official agenda at the highest level.

In Finland, as noted above, changes in the role of the Employment Service date from 1993. In addition, guidance is increasingly incorporated into labour market training programmes; and university careers services are expanding their role to include skills training for graduates.

Despite official rhetoric on the need for adult vocational/educational guidance, and many demands for increased provision, there is little sign of rhetoric becoming reality in the United Kingdom. The Scottish Office is far more aware than equivalent state departments in the rest of the country, and has funded or part-funded several worthwhile initiatives, such as information and basic training materials for practitioners, adult guidance networks throughout Scotland, some targeted services and the establishment of a Scottish Guidance Group. In the United Kingdom generally there is, in practice, a range of provision for adults found in, for example, 'one-stop shops', colleges and universities, community education services, community-based projects, local economic development initiatives, mobile services and Unemployed Workers' Centres and embedded in educational and training programmes. Provision, however, is neither uniform nor universally available: it is ample in some areas, absent in others.

In Ireland, on the other hand, such services are almost entirely confined to those in second and third level education. There has been in recent years an expansion of services for employees and jobseekers; the NRB (case study no. 9) provides guidance for disabled people; guidance is embedded into 'return to work' courses and training programmes and provided free in unemployed resource centres and for a fee by private agencies. Nevertheless, the Irish case studies represent a difficult search for professional adult guidance services which target socially excluded groups and such guidance is often embedded in more general services or issue-based organisations, as is also the case with some of the Finnish and British case studies. The biggest access issue for Ireland, as the conclusions to Chapter Three make clear, is the shortage of provision and lack of cohesion. Some of the case studies, in fact, represent rather the kinds of service which guidance services need to access, rather than guidance services in their own right. These can, however, be useful in reaching one of the hardest groups to access and the least tolerant of the step-by-step approach that is often the most effective in the long run - under-qualified and unemployed men: 'When money or work are under discussion, men touch upon other matters as well' (Finnish national report, page 286 of this volume).

We can, then, discern several types of service:

- Service offering vocational information, advice and guidance only
- Multi-functional (1): offering information, advice vocational guidance and counselling plus training or direct access to education/training
- Multi-functional (2): offering information, advice vocational guidance and counselling plus other forms of counselling, for example, for indebtedness, problems with state benefits, housing, family, relationships, health, the law
- Multi-functional (3): the 'one-stop shop', information, advice vocational guidance and counselling, other forms of counselling, training, and often a careers library, open learning centre. This may be a single organisation or a cluster of separate but related agencies in the same building or hall.
- Projects or programmes where vocational guidance is an integral part
- Project, programme or organisation offering related services and with direct links with or system of referral to a guidance service (e.g. Disabled Drivers Association, case study no. 15)
- Potential site for vocational guidance, either integral, in partnership with a service or as an outreach centre (e.g. Travellers Visibility Group, case study no. 17 and the Italian Social Co-operatives, of which Cooperativa O.R.SO. is a good example, case study nos. 4 and 5)

There is an issue concerning whether services should be specialised or mainstream. On the one hand, a mainstream service can offer more facilities, is likely to have more and more permanent funding, better qualified staff and inservice training programmes; on the other hand, a specialised service can develop more expertise in its target groups(s). Without going too deeply into the matter here, we would make the following points:

- there should be collaboration between mainstream and specialised services, in particular exchange of information and expertise, and access by specialised services to mainstream facilities
- until mainstream services have developed the expertise to deal with special client groups, specialised services should be supported
- there are some clients who will always need entry through a specialised, empathic service, and so there will always be a need for specialised services

- nevertheless, it is important that mainstream services with a permanent funding base be enhanced to take on the values and practices of the best specialised services and in some cases to replace them

For mainstream societies to replace specialised services completely would require the 'mainstreaming' of all groups within society and the end of social exclusion; it is, therefore, an outcome to be desired.

What can vocational guidance services usefully do?

The basic functions of such services were outlined in Chapter One of this report and will not be repeated here; but the case studies reveal additional functions which are particularly important when dealing with disadvantaged individuals.

- Network Occupazione Lecco (no. 3), for example, looks for new sources of employment and areas of strong labour market demand. Up-to-date labour market information, therefore, whether collected by an individual service or a service network, is a vital function.
- Groupwork can help to reduce loneliness and social isolation and improve social skills (e.g. Fountain House Näsinkulma, case study no. 38).
- Services can help prepare clients for working life in general and introduce non-nationals to the new working culture (e.g. CeSIL, Helsinki Employment and Training Project for Immigrant and the Ingrian Centre, case study nos. 7, 40 and 41).
- Services can give clients as much time as they need (e.g. Community Service Volunteers, case study no. 28).
- Selected services can serve as sites for developing and testing innovation, such as refining working methods (e.g. the Action Based Counselling developed by Gorbals Initiative, case study no. 32) or introducing mentoring or befriending schemes (e.g. W.I.N.N.S.J. and the Scottish Refugee Council, case study nos. 13 and 31).
- They can form part of a smooth progression path to literacy/numeracy, education/training, work placements and so on.
- They can contribute to the collection of information, for example, on foreign qualifications.

What qualities are needed in a vocational guidance service to combat social exclusion?

Disadvantaged individuals generally suffer more than a precarious relationship with the labour market: they often lack confidence, lack resources and have other difficulties in their lives which affect their chances of employment. Services therefore need to be:

- client-centred (recognising each person as a distinct individual with specific needs)
- holistic in approach (addressing the whole person and his/her personal circumstances)
- empathic but also realistic
- non-bureaucratic but effective in carrying out their remit and in evaluating their performance

- targeted to specific groups, with expertise in their life circumstances, while retaining the focus on the individual and avoiding stereotyping or treating different ethnic groups, for example, as if they were all the same (the challenge here is demonstrated by the Extra Centre, case study no. 9, which in one year dealt with people from 67 different countries)
- locally-based and responsive to changes in the local economy
- firmly located in networks with a) similar services, including state Employment Services; b) other services and agencies designed to combat social exclusion; c) local employers and employers' organisations; d) trade unions (as is most commonly the case in the Italian case studies); e) local community organisations and clubs; f) providers of adult education and training; g) local schools
- accessibility - this will be dealt with in more detail below

What are the problems for existing provision?
As already stated, existing provision is characterised by its scarcity and uneven distribution; but many services that are already in place are operating under difficult circumstances. As well as expanding provision, and preferably giving it statutory status, many improvements could be made to enhance existing services. In large part these require the support of policy-makers.

- the nature of funding: short-term, multiple funders
- Many services struggle with short-term funding from a variety of sources, with different accounting dates and requirements. This results in too much time being spent on accounting (some funders demand monthly audits, which are inappropriate for non-routine operations) and seeking further funding, time which could be spent serving the needs of the client or making medium-term plans, instead of merely reacting to demands on a day-to-day basis. Funders all too often pay late and this results in cash-flow problems and short-term contracts for staff, resulting in high staff turnover, which is in the interests neither of the organisation nor of its clients. One useful policy recently introduced by the DfEE is that of advancing money to projects once ESF funding is assured. In some cases funding ends or is greatly reduced and the service ceases to exist or has to reduce its functions or client numbers. Funding should be long-term and co-ordinated. Services should also be protected from the effects of local political re-organisation, such as that in the West of Scotland, which resulted in reduced funding to some very good services.
- over-reliance on European funding

The important and valuable role played by EU funding cannot be over-emphasised; but projects which have proved their worth should be continued using national funding. All too often, the end of EU funding means the end of the project or programme. With the accession of new, and poorer, member-states, much funding is likely to be switched away from the current beneficiaries.

- the low profile and lack of awareness of guidance among the general public
- Generic publicity for vocational guidance is needed to inform people nationally as well as locally about this relatively new occupation, for example, through the use of the mass media, and in particular television, which probably reaches the widest audience.
- insufficient funding for a fully effective service

- Extra funding, for particular services and for the support of guidance in general, should be awarded on the basis of a careful evaluation of needs. The areas which should be considered are:

1 the *optimum number of personnel* needed to serve the target area. Waiting times should not be so long that an applicant loses hope or confidence in the service. Some clients need longer periods of guidance than funding might allow and continuing guidance after a client has left the service or started employment is sometimes helpful

2 *training* and qualifications for guidance staff - it is not necessary for staff to be university-educated, but it is necessary for them to receive good initial and ongoing training, both in guidance procedures and in the needs of socially excluded groups. The promotion of equality of opportunity as regards access to vocational training and their effective participation therein for disadvantaged groups such as migrant workers, refugees and people with various types of disability means that it is important to have guidance workers who are specially trained to understand the particular circumstances and needs of such groups. In Finland, there is training in guidance only for Employment Service vocational guidance psychologists and information officers and for educational careers service personnel. There is no generic training available to, for example, the non-state services which are currently developing to serve the needs of specially disadvantaged groups. In the United Kingdom and Ireland most guidance counsellors working in the Careers Service have postgraduate qualifications, but adult guidance is generally only a minor part of the curriculum and the majority of those qualified in this way go into the educational services. In the United Kingdom, NVQs in guidance have now been developed up to level 4; so far, however, it is estimated that the great majority of people delivering vocational guidance to adults are inadequately qualified and trained. On the other hand, where properly qualified personnel are required, there is likely to be a staff shortage, such as that suffered by the CILOs in Italy. The use of conscientious objectors there to perform routine tasks is interesting, and in countries without conscription these could be replaced by jobseekers on work placement - but they too would require basic training, for reasons outlined below.

3 resources with which to conduct ongoing *evaluation* of the service and to track clients who have left the service, in order to ascertain their progress. It is true that the outcomes of guidance are often hard to evaluate. Some outcomes, such as increased confidence and motivation (known as 'soft' outcomes), are hard to quantify and it is gratifying that funders such as the ESF do value these as outcomes, as well as 'hard' outcomes such as progression to education, training or employment. Furthermore, guidance is not a 'quick fix' solution and it may take up to three years for the guidance process to bear fruit; by this time services are rarely still in contact with their former clients. External evaluations should also be carried out from time to time but not in a manner that disrupts the smooth working of the service. Where effective services have been subjected to a rigorous external evaluation, they have been shown to help both individuals and the local economy (see case study no. 36, New Routes).

4 resources for appropriate *networking*, including adult guidance networks and structures linking guidance services to providers of education and training, employers and trade unions, state Employment Services and other agencies involved with the target group.

5 *support services for clients*, such as the provision of a crèche or play area for accompanying children (preferably with trained assistants, as in Meridian, case study no. 25); a careers library or an open learning centre; grants for travel to the service or to interviews, clothes or tools (see Routeways, case study no. 23); access to education/training bursaries

6 *ICT* for use by staff and clients, to gather information, for networking and for computer-mediated distance learning

7 suitably arranged *accommodation* which, for example, permits clients to check information for themselves or to have private interviews

8 last, but by no means least, the resources, ideas and training to *enhance access* to the service, in whichever ways outlined below are appropriate for a given target group. Not only are those most likely to benefit from guidance the least likely to access it, they are often the hardest groups to reach.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SERVICES ON ENHANCING ACCESS

The recommendations in Chapters Four and Five are particularly rich in examples of enhancing access, so these will merely be summarised here.

Targeted information about the service

Such information should include what the service does, what practical help it can offer, what facilities it has and about guidance in general (given that national initiatives seem not to exist). Targeted marketing has involved cafes and pubs; libraries and churches; gymnasia; hospitals, clinics and health centres; immigration centres; state Employment Services; centres and clubs for the unemployed; and many more (see in particular pp 228-9). GALDUS (case study no. 6) is a very good example of precise targeting. Some services have even attracted clients by 'knocking on doors' in targeted areas. One particularly innovative example of publicising the service is that of the 'Lone Ranger Drama Group' (One Plus One Parent Families, case study no. 24). It is important that leaflets, posters and so on should be written in plain and comprehensible language, and where appropriate in ethnic minority languages. General marketing has proved less effective than targeted marketing and so should not replace targeted publicity, as shown by the experience of the Employment and Training Project for Immigrants (case study no. 40), but it still has its value: this includes items in national newspapers, and on radio and television; city bulletins delivered free to all households; local radio and television; and the Internet.

Networking

It is extremely beneficial to network with other guidance services, Employment Services and specialised agencies, so that they look out for people who would benefit from vocational guidance; with employers providing work placements or about to make workers redundant or take on new staff; with trade unions, who provide the best access route to workers at risk of redundancy; with local clubs, associations and resource centres for the unemployed. The Ethnic Minority Enterprise Centre (case study no. 29) is one example of a service which maintains particularly close and valuable links with both the Employment Service and, importantly, with employers.

Active collaboration with other types of agency

Examples include joint projects (e.g. Tallagh Partnership Ltd, Rehab Scotland and One Plus One Parent Families, case study nos. 19, 22 and 24) and the close relationship between the Laptuote Foundation (case study no. 37) and the Mental Health Office and others to ensure additional support for clients with psychological problems.

Outreach

This means taking the service to where people are, using familiar, non-threatening locations, such as visits to Traveller sites or local centres (e.g. Pavee Point and the Ethnic Minority Enterprise Centre, case study nos. 18 and 29). One particularly innovative initiative is the involvement of the public-health nurse in making the first contact (Vire Project/Vantaa Crisis Centre, case study no. 42); another is the Rehab Scotland Open Doors Cafe (case study no. 22), staffed by learning disabled people and operating as both PR and an access point. Outreach is also valuable for people in isolated areas or detention centres (e.g. IRD Duhallow and the Scottish Refugee Council, case study nos. 14 and 31). Mobile services using guidance buses (Routeways, case study no. 23 and Step Up to Adult Learning, p. 232) are another form of outreach, as are telephone helplines with the option of a follow-up guidance interview (e.g. Continuing Education Gateway, case study no. 30). Home visits are occasionally offered, especially for disabled people (e.g. National Rehabilitation Board and LEAD Scotland, case study nos. 16 and 21. Initiatives which involve both outreach and active collaboration with other agencies are exemplified by both Making Training Work and Careers Bradford (case study nos. 27 and 33, and see pp 230-1), which give basic guidance training to people working with target groups or in the community. Also included here is the embedding of guidance into training programmes, which often give access to under-qualified men (e.g. the Wise Group, case study no. 34).

Facilitating progression to or making accessible a mainstream service
This is often necessary, when people are ready, to accustom them to a more formal environment and allow the use of a greater range of facilities than can be provided on an outreach basis. Important factors here are physical accessibility, such as a city centre location served by good public transport; or location near the target group, such as a housing estate or local centre (e.g.) Northwest Network Skillshops, case study no. 35); easy access to buildings, especially for those with mobility problems; an opportunity to sample the service before deciding to enter the guidance process, which might be done through Open Days, accompanied visits or through provision of an information section where potential clients can 'browse' without being approached.

Creating a welcoming atmosphere
This is extremely important, bearing in mind that many people have had bad experiences of offices and officialdom. The atmosphere should be relaxed and friendly even though the service should be professional. Every member of staff, including janitorial, reception and clerical staff, must be friendly and welcoming but not intrusive. There should, ideally, be no intimidating area to negotiate and users should easily be able to see where to go, preferably (but rarely in practice) from the outside (e.g. Togher Local Employment Service and New Routes, case study nos. 2 and 36). The accommodation should be clean and bright but not luxurious. For the most vulnerable groups it is important to provide a holistic, empathic service, such as that of Glasgow's Flourish House and the Tampere Fountain House (case study nos. 26 and 38). The active involvement of members of the target group not only makes it more likely that clients will find the service empathic, but is also a way of publicising the service through informal networks (e.g. One Plus One Parent Families and Meridian, case study nos. 24 and 25). For speakers of other languages it is obviously helpful if they can use their mother tongue, speak to compatriots or have the use of an interpreter; but this is not practical for all groups, given the great range of languages spoken by immigrants and refugees. Nevertheless, there should at least be leaflets and posters in a range of languages. For some clients, facilities for accompanying children are important, as is having the choice of a single-sex group (e.g. Routeways and Espoo Employment Project for Women, case study nos. 23 and 39).

Delivering a high-quality service
The commonest form of access in all the countries surveyed is through word of mouth. This does not mean that a popular service should cease active marketing; but it does mean that, for its reputation to spread and bring in new clients, the service delivered should be of the highest quality. 'One-stop shops' - which offer not only information, advice, guidance and counselling but also direct access to education and training, careers information libraries, computerised course information and self-assessment packages, open learning centres, jobsearch training, confidence-raising and assertiveness courses, or just an informal chat - enable individuals to tap into a guidance system tailored to their individual requirements in a comprehensive way; but less comprehensive services, with excellent links to other types of provider, may

be just as good. What is important is that, when clients have decided that vocational guidance can help them, they receive a high-quality service.

THE CASE FOR VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE

There have been many studies on access to learning for adults at risk of social exclusion (for example, Bridge & Salt 1992; Clayton 1995; Crain 1995; Davies 1990; Hamilton 1994; Oglesby 1991) but very few on access to vocational guidance. In many ways the barriers to access both to learning and to guidance are very similar, but there is one major difference: even where there are many learning opportunities for adults the provision of guidance is in general very sparse. This paucity of provision is, therefore, the greatest barrier to access; yet how can the maze of education and training courses - and the substantial barriers to participation therein throughout the EU (McGivney 1992) - be negotiated without, at the very least, information and advice, with the option of guidance for those who need it? We take as fundamental the fact that lifelong learning requires support from an effective strategy for lifelong impartial vocational guidance and counselling. In particular, this can form a valuable, even essential, link between socially excluded individuals and lifelong learning. The search for appropriate qualifications is far from straightforward, and comparability is opaque not only transnationally but even nationally (Parkes 1998). The situation is not helped by roughly parallel paths through academic, technical and vocational qualifications (for an example, see Edexcel Foundation 1998). An adult vocational/educational guidance service which is sensitive to the needs of inadequately-educated adults can facilitate their entry into appropriate levels of education with clearly-marked progression paths.

In addition, job-seeking for those isolated from informal labour market networks has become a much more sophisticated process than formerly and the large pool of unemployed allows employers to demand ever-increasing types and ranges of skills. It appears that measures taken by state employment services to help the registered unemployed to find jobs or become 'job-ready' are widely regarded as inadequate, both by their users and by guidance professionals. Vocational guidance for adults, on the other hand, can be beneficial in acting as a link between the requirements of employers and the skills, including personal and social skills, of individuals. A proactive service can constitute the first link between disadvantaged individuals and training that is both appropriate to their needs and interests and in demand in the labour market.

The counselling component of guidance is particularly important and effective for adults who lack confidence in their abilities and experiential learning either to (re)enter the labour market or to change the types of work they are currently doing but with which they are dissatisfied.

Free guidance services are, quite logically, most likely to be found in areas of deprivation. This means that some people who can be deemed at risk of social exclusion do have access to the guidance that could help them improve their labour market position; but many, probably the majority, live outside areas where guidance services exist. Furthermore, even where such services are available, those who most need them are the least likely to use them. This is why we chose to focus in this study on access.

The task of combating social exclusion is huge and complex, and we do not claim that adult vocational guidance and counselling can of itself solve the general problem or even help all individuals at risk of social exclusion. One general policy we would like to advocate is the provision of affordable, good-quality care for children and dependent adults, to release carers for labour market preparation or entry or simply to relieve their isolation.

Increasing the employability of individuals is part of the solution to the problem of a labour force with insufficient or inappropriate skills, but this is certainly not always sufficient; for example, even well-qualified members of ethnic minorities face far greater difficulties in obtaining good-quality employment than ethnic majorities with the same qualifications. Furthermore, labour-market-oriented approaches:

> tend to emphasise individual responsibility and the capacity of each individual when the reality is that there are not enough jobs and for a lot of jobs, individual characteristics are not a significant factor ... Action on the demand side of the labour market should be taken as well as on the supply side (Darmon and Frade 1998:39-40).

Furthermore, the current high (though generally decreasing) rate of unemployment and the growing number of low-paid and insecure jobs in the EU are not susceptible to individual solutions. There is a structural imbalance in the labour force, whereby many in employment are working long hours and under pressure, often at more than one job, while others have no paid employment at all. There are also regional imbalances within member states; and individual migration is not the only, and certainly not the most humane, answer to the problem of areas in economic decline.

At the same time, employers are mistrustful of the long-term unemployed - and indeed of many of the groups targeted above - however much training they have undertaken, and unwilling to hire them; many also seem reluctant to invest in training for older people or in adapting premises or working practices for disabled people or to devise family-friendly working arrangements and facilities for parents of dependent children.

What is needed in addition to measures to improve employability is a real commitment to full employment (which we observe with pleasure is now on the EU agenda), with ongoing opportunities for continued learning and family-friendly policies, along with complementary measures to assist people in poverty, including the maintenance of state benefits, support for voluntary and collective self-help activities, the extension of intermediate labour market (ILM) initiatives (see Macfarlane 1997) and the development of the social economy (see O'Hara 1997); and a sustained campaign, with appropriate incentives for SMEs such as training subsidies, to encourage employers to set aside prejudice and integrate into the workforce more people from disadvantaged groups.

What we argue, then, is that access to vocational guidance should form one strand of a multi-faceted approach to reducing the manifest inequalities inherent in societies which are increasingly divided into those with reasonable life chances and those without.

We believe that there should be:

- **a strong core of methods** which have been shown to be of value in facilitating entry to the labour force. Eurocounsel collected a large number of examples of good practice in delivering vocational guidance to groups at risk of social exclusion, in particular, the long-term unemployed (Beekhuizen 1995; Watt 1993); and AEGIS (1995) has provided a good model of the core functions of vocational guidance. Marginalised individuals are not accustomed to being asked what they want, need and aspire to, so an important function is to give them the confidence to articulate these feelings. Curricula have been designed not only to upskill and reskill women but also to assist their personal development, most notably to restore the confidence that is often lost while they are out of the labour market. It now appears that men as well as women need assistance with personal development so that they can adapt to new labour market structures and practices (Clayton et al. 1997). Building on previous work, therefore, we advocate:
- **a strategy for lifelong access**, using methods suggested above, to impartial, client-centred, holistic adult vocational guidance and counselling by qualified practitioners with up-to-date labour market information and access to inservice

training, which should be free of charge to those at risk of social exclusion, including those who are currently employed but in insecure or ill-paid jobs. Guidance must be recognised as a process, not a one-off intervention. For these groups, access to these services should be **a right, not a matter of chance.**

- **active involvement of the social partners**, especially SMEs and trade unions, as providers of information, referrals and outreach sites for adult guidance services, and as targets for advocacy on behalf of clients by guidance services
- **synergy** both between services providing guidance within each member state and between representative bodies of the EU states, so that good practice can readily be disseminated and transferred between services, regions and states. Guidance services should have good working relationships with other relevant services, including state/regional employment services, education and training providers, social and health services, specialist agencies and so on, for although guidance services should be holistic in addressing the whole person, this does not mean that they should attempt to give advice and guidance that is outwith their field of competence. They should, rather, be able to refer clients to (where they do not themselves provide) pre-employment supports such as help with finance or housing; basic skills and language training; confidence-building; life and social skills; and pre-vocational education and training. They should also, where appropriate, maintain close links with the local community.
- **a stable funding base and universally available provision**. It is alarming that many of the best services are dependent on short-term, multiple funding, often from the ESF or attached to other programmes which might cease to exist. We recognise that there is unlikely to be greater overall funding for adult vocational guidance and counselling, and we accept that those who can pay, should pay. For those who cannot, and wherever they live, the service should be free, accessible and voluntary. Funding should cover ways of enhancing access and providing supporting services such as crèche facilities, follow-up and inservice training. Furthermore, a degree of redistribution of resources from large-scale, generic, standardised services, and from school-based services, which can provide only initial careers guidance which rapidly becomes outdated in today's changing labour market, towards more locally-based, client-centred, holistic services for adults would go some way towards improving the quality and appropriateness of the guidance currently on offer. Furthermore, providers of adult and continuing education and of adult learning in general need to provide more guidance, especially in higher education institutions; and a good way to reach men is through embedding guidance into vocational training programmes.
- national bodies to monitor and support decentralised, locally-based provision; maintain strict control to **prevent competition** between guidance services, which is wholly inappropriate, **and** to prevent **duplication** in small areas, which is a waste of scarce resources; to oversee **appropriate quality controls and evaluation** of services, which recognise and take into account the special nature of their target groups; to **support networks** and disseminate good practice; to organise **inservice training**; and to **market guidance** in a generic way.

The ultimate aim of this study, in addition to providing practical and tested ideas for services on enhancing access, is to persuade policy-makers to progress from merely acknowledging the need for adult vocational guidance and counselling (which they increasingly do, though generally in passing) to providing such services on a statutory basis, services which should be free and without limit of time to groups at risk of social exclusion.

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APPENDIX A

Geographical distribution of the case studies

No.	Name	Country	Town/city/area of case study
1	Centres for Local Employment Initiatives (CILO)	Italy	Piedmont, area around Turin
2	CILO of Chivasso	Italy	Piedmont, Chivasso
3	Network Occupazione Lecco	Italy	Lombardy, Lecco
4	Social Cooperation in Italy	Italy	
5	Cooperative O.R.SO	Italy	Piedmont, Turin
6	GALDUS – Formazione & Ricerca	Italy	Lombardy, Milan
7	CeSIL	Italy	Lombardy, Milan
8	Fondazione San Carlo	Italy	Lombardy, Milan
9	Extra Centre	Italy	Lombardy, Milan
10	Orientamento Lavoro	Italy	Lombardy, Milan
11	DonnaLavoroDonna	Italy	Lombardy, Milan
12	Cgil-NidiL/*New Working Identities*	Italy	Lombardy, Milan
13	WINNSJ	Ireland	West of Ireland
14	IRD Duhallow	Ireland	Newmarket, Co Cork
15	Disabled Drivers Association	Ireland	Ballindine, Co Mayo
16	National Rehabilitation Board	Ireland	Cork
17	The Travellers Visibility Group	Ireland	Cork City
18	Pavee Point	Ireland	Dublin
19	Tallaght Partnership Ltd	Ireland	Tallaght, Dublin
20	Local Employment Service	Ireland	Togher, Cork City
21	LEAD Scotland	Scotland, UK	Glasgow
22	REHAB Scotland	Scotland, UK	Glasgow
23	Routeways	Scotland, UK	Paisley
24	One Plus One Parent Families	Scotland, UK	Glasgow & West of Scotland

No.	Name	Country	Town/city/area of case study
25	Meridian: Black and Ethnic Minority Women's Information and Resource Centre	Scotland, UK	Glasgow
26	Flourish House	Scotland, UK	Glasgow
27	Making Training Work	England, UK	London
28	Community Service Volunteers	United Kingdom	Glasgow
29	Ethnic Minority Enterprise Centre	Scotland, UK	Glasgow
30	Continuing Education Gateway	Scotland, UK	
31	Scottish Refugee Council	Scotland, UK	Glasgow
32	Gorbals Initiative	Scotland, UK	Gorbals, Glasgow
33	Careers Bradford Ltd	UK	Yorkshire, Bradford
34	The Wise Group	United Kingdom	Glasgow
35	Northwest Economic Network Skillshops	Scotland, UK	North-West Glasgow
36	New Routes to Jobs, Training and Enterprise	Scotland, UK	Blantyre, Lanarkshire
37	Laptuote-säätiö / *Laptuote Foundation*	Finland	Lappeenranta
38	Näsinkulman klubitalo / *Fountain House Näsinkulma*	Finland	Tampere
39	Naisten työllistymisprojekti */Employment Project for Women*	Finland	Espoo
40	Helsingin kaupungin opetusvirasto Maahanmuuttajakoulutusyksikkö / *Helsinki City Education Department:The Immigrants' Training Unit*	Finland	Helsinki
41	Inkerikeskus ry/ *Ingrian Centre reg.*	Finland	Helsinki
42	Vire-projekti/*Vire Project/* Vantaan kriisipalvelu/*Vantaa Crisis Service*	Finland	Vantaa
43	Sateenkaari -projekti/*Rainbow Project*	Finland	Espoo, Tapiola
44	Valtti-projekti / *Valtti Project /* Tampereen toimintakeskus / *Tampere Activity Centre*	Finland	Tampere

APPENDIX B

Case studies by target group(s)

People in rural areas: W.I.N.N.S.J. (No. 13); IRD Duhallow (no. 14); LEAD Scotland (no. 21); Continuing Education Gateway (no. 30)

People in deprived urban areas: Tallaght Partnership Ltd (no. 19); Togher Local Employment Service (no. 20); Routeways (no. 23); Gorbals Initiative (no. 32); Careers Bradford Ltd (no. 33); Northwest Economic Network Skillshops (no. 35); New Routes to Jobs, Training and Enterprise (no. 36)

Prisoners, ex-offenders: some CILOs (no. 1); some social cooperatives (no. 4); Orientamento Lavoro (no.10); Togher Local Employment Service (no. 20); Northwest Economic Network Skillshops (no. 35); Valtti Project (no. 44)

Long-term unemployed: CILOs (no. 1); CILO of Chivasso (no. 2); Network Occupazione Lecco (no. 3); social cooperatives (no. 4); GALDUS (no. 6); Tallaght Partnership Ltd (no. 19); Togher Local Employment Service (no. 20); REHAB Scotland (no. 22); Routeways (no. 23); One Plus One Parent Families (no. 24); Gorbals Initiative (no. 32); The Wise Group (no. 34); Northwest Economic Network Skillshops (no. 35); New Routes to Jobs, Training and Enterprise (no. 36); Vire Project/Vantaa Crisis Service (no. 42);

Employees on atypical contracts: Cgil-NIdiL Nuove Identità (no. 12)

Women and lone parents: some CILOs (no. 1); Network Occupazione Lecco (no. 3); Orientamento Lavoro (no. 10); DonnaLavoroDonna (no. 11); IRD Duhallow (no. 14); Travellers Visibility Group (no. 17); Pavee Point (no. 18); Togher Local Employment Service (no. 20); Routeways (no. 23); One Plus One Parent Families (no. 24); Meridian: Black and ethnic minority women's information and resource centre (no. 25); Ethnic Minority Enterprise Centre (no. 29); Careers Bradford Ltd (no. 33); Northwest Economic Network Skillshops (no. 35); New Routes to Jobs, Training and Enterprise (no. 36); Employment Project for Women, City of Espoo (no. 39)

Refugees, immigrants, ethnic minorities and Travellers: some CILOs (no. 1); some social cooperatives (no. 4); CeSIL (no. 7); Fondazione San Carlo (no. 8); Extra Centre (no. 9); Travellers Visibility Group (no. 17); Pavee Point (no. 18); Tallaght Partnership Ltd (no. 19); Meridian: Black and ethnic minority women's information and resource centre (no. 25); Flourish House Education and Employment Unit (no. 26); Making Training Work (no. 27); Community Service Volunteers (no. 28); Ethnic Minority Enterprise Centre (no. 29); Continuing Education Gateway (no. 30); Scottish Refugee Council (no. 31); Careers Bradford Ltd (no. 33); The Wise Group (no. 34); Northwest Economic Network Skillshops (no. 35); Employment and Training Project for Immigrants, City of Helsinki (no. 40)

Disabled, physically, psychologically or learning: social cooperatives (no. 4); GALDUS (no. 6); Disabled Drivers Association (no. 15); National Rehabilitation Board (no. 16); Tallaght Partnership Ltd (no. 19); LEAD Scotland (no. 21); REHAB Scotland (no. 22); Flourish House Education and Employment Unit (no. 26); Making Training Work (no. 27); Community Service Volunteers (no. 28); Continuing Education Gateway (no. 30); The Wise Group (no. 34); Northwest Economic Network Skillshops (no. 35); Laptuote Foundation (no. 37); Fountain House, Tampere (no. 38);

People in housing need or homeless: Fondazione San Carlo (no. 8); Flourish House Education and Employment Unit (no. 26); Making Training Work (no. 27); Community Service Volunteers (no. 28); Gorbals Initiative (no. 32); The Wise Group (no. 34); Northwest Economic Network Skillshops (no. 35)

Disadvantaged groups in general: social cooperatives (no. 4); Cooperativa Sociale O.R.SO. (no. 5); GALDUS (no. 6); Continuing Education Gateway (no. 30)

APPENDIX C

Interview schedules administered to the services

A. History, context and general structure, including funding and staffing

History, context

What year did the year did the service start?

By whom/what organisation was it inaugurated?

General structure

How many branches are there if more than one?

What is the job title of the overall manager?

What kinds of people are represented on the Management Board (or equivalent)?

Funding

What is the source of funding?

Over what period is funding granted?

How much was the total funding in 1996?

Has funding been increasing, decreasing or staying about the same in real terms?

If the funding is broken down into elements, can you tell me how?

If the funding is from more than one source, what are the propositions?

Staffing

How many staff in total are there?

How many of these are: full-time paid, part-time paid, voluntary?

Are the paid staff permanent or on contract (long-term/short-term)?

What are the basic qualifications or qualities required of the staff?

Is there any in-service on-going training for clients and if so how often?

Does such training include voluntary/part-time staff?

Are staff sent on external courses to update skills and knowledge?

Dpes such training include voluntary/part-time staff?

Do staff hold regular meetings to exchange information and ideas?

What use is made of computers in the service?

B. Functions, target groups and content

Functions and philosophy of the service

What are the broad functions of the service?

If the functions include training for clients, who delivers the training?

What, if any, are the target groups?

If the target groups include those at risk of social exclusion, how are they defined?

What area is covered (e.g. local, regional, national)?

What is the philosophy behind what you do?

Users profile

How many people use the centre per week/per annum?

Do you have statistics I could have on the users (age, sex, qualifications etc.)?

Is confidentiality on individual users maintained?

Content. Methods used and services provided

Labour market counselling

Is individual counselling available?

If so, does this include:

(self)-assessment of skills, of abilities, of experiential learning; confidence-building; motivating; raising self-esteem information/advice about training, rescholing, further education, employment possibilities; the development of a personal/career plan; psycho-social counselling, and if so for what sort of problems (psychological, social, medical, legal, financial, family accommodation); gender-specific counselling?

Is group counselling available?

If so, does this include:

self-awareness, assertiveness training; peer-group counselling; gender-specific group counselling available?

Training courses

Are work preparation courses for the long-term unemployed available?

If, so does the agency have its own workshops or have easy access to workshops? Are gender-specific courses available;

What kind of training is given: help with job search? Does this include. CVs, filling in forms, writing letters, interview techniques, other?

Work experience placements; help with setting up own business; career planning projects; other?

If training is offered, are grants available: for the cost of training; for users' expenses while training;

Does counselling/advice continue during training?

Other

Does advocacy play any role in your work?

Are any other facilities provided by the service?

Are other activities carried out at the centre and if so what?

C. Access. Users - Access - what does the service do to bring people in?

How is the service advertised/how do users find out about it?

Does the service engage in PR to inform the public and the funder(s)?

Who is allowed to use the service?

Are users referred or voluntary or a mixture?

What if anything do used pay?

Is there a time limit on use of your services (i.e. for how long can an individual continue coming?

How many hours "allowance" do they have?

How do users make the first contact? (drop-in/phone)

How do users physically access the service?

What are the opening hours?

Are there free leaflets/information packs available?

Are there informative posters inside the reception area?

Are job vacancies displayed on notice boards?

Is there a library?

Is there access to computerised facilities?

Are there childcare facilities?

Is the agency a welcoming place for people with low confidence?

Are home visit offered?

Are there any outreach initiatives?

Are there any language or cultural problems?

Is continuing guidance available after a user has started a job?

D. Networking

With which if any other guidance/counselling agencies do you have co-operative links?

Does the agency have links with the following institutions, and if so what nature of such links?

Local employers, Trade union, Local government, LECs, the Employment Department, any European agency

Is the agency in any networks, and if so which?

E. OUTCOMES AND ASSESSMENT

Outcomes. Users - feedback

Do you gather feedback from users in the course of counselling/training?

Do you follow up users to find out what happened to them after guidance and counselling?

If so, for how long?

Do you have any information on the "success" rate, i.e. people returning to the labour market?

Your assessment of the service

What are the strengths of the service you service you offer?

How holistic would you say the service is - i.e. addressing a range of needs, not just vocational?

Are there any ways in which you think the service could be improved?

Interview schedules administered to the service users

1 Name of service used

2 Did you have any help with getting into education or work before coming to this service?

3 If so, what kind of help did you have?

4 How did you find out about this service?

5 What were the best things about this service for you?

6 What did this service help you to achieve?

APPENDIX D

Some useful websites*

* This list is very far from complete: if readers would email

p.m.clayton@ace.gla.ac.uk

the addresses of other useful sites she will ensure that they are added to the University of Glasgow web version of the Report. Similarly if any sites cease existence they will be removed from the list.

Name	**URL**
Adapt and Employment: Community Initiatives (Finland)	http://www.europs.be/en/programs/prgopa14.htm
ARIS (Adult Education Resources and Information Service)	http://sunsite.anu.edu.au/language-australia/aris
Associazioni Cristiane Lavoratori Italiani	http://www.glauco.it/acli
Careers and Occupational Information Centre, (DfEE)	http://www.open.gov.uk/dfee/ccdintro.htm
Careers Bradford	http://www.careersb.bradtec.co.uk/
Careers Europe, United Kingdom	http://www.careersb.bradtec.co.uk/europe/index.htm
The Careers Service (DfEE)	http://www.dfee.gov.uk/ccd/cswhere.htm
CEDEFOP	http://www.cedefop.gr
Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion at the London School of Economics and Political Science	http://sticerd.lse.ac.uk
Cert	http://www.cert.ie
Charities Direct	http://www.caritasdata.co.uk
Communities Online (online database and map of community-based projects throughout the United Kingdom)	http://www.communities.org.uk
Community Technical and Adult Education	http://www.ctae.com
Consorzio Nazionale della Cooperazione sociale (National Social cooperation Consortium	http://www.retecgm.org
Continuing Education Gateway	http://www.ceg.org.uk
Danish Refugee Council	http://www. arc.dk/
ECRE Task Force on (Refugee) Integration	http://www.refugeenet.org
Edexcel: the Foundation for Educational Excellence	http://www.edexcel.org.uk
Education-line: electronic texts in education and training	http://www.leeds.ac.uk/educol/

Name	**URL**
Electronic Immigration Network	http://ein.org.uk
EURYDICE information network on education in Europe	http://www.eurydice.org
FACE (Further and Continuing Education research group)	http://www.sbu.ac.uk/~face/
Fondazione Cariplo per le iniziative e lo studio sulla multietnicità (ISMU)	http://www.ismu.org
Fryer Report on Lifelong Learning	http://www.lifelonglearning.co.uk/nagcell/index.htm
Glasgow Development Agency	http://www.glasgowdevelopment.co.uk
GLADNET (Global Applied Disability Research and Information Network on Employment and Training)	http://www.gladnet.org
Global Learning	http://www.ukglobal-learn.com
IBM-supported: Training for Work projects	http://www.uk.ibm.com/community/comm1.html
Informagiovani	http://www.informagiovani.it
Inroads National Home Page (ethnic minorities)	http://www.inroadsinc.org/
Institute for Public Policy Research	http://www.ippr.org.uk
Institute of Careers Guidance (ICG)	http://www.icg-uk.org
Institute of Guidance Counsellors	http://kola.dcu.ie/~igc
Integra Projects	http://www.iol.ie/EMPLOYMENT/integra/projectdot.html
International Careers Journal (ICG)	http://www.careers-journal.com
Italian Ministry of Labour	http://www.minlavoro.it
Italian Ministry of Social Affairs	http://www.affarisociali.it
Italian Ministry of Social Affairs, Research Commission for poverty and social exclusion	http://www.affarisociali.it/servizi
Italian National Institute for Statistics	http://www.istat.it
Italian Parliament	http://www.parlamento.it
Jewish Vocational Service	http://www.jvs.org
Kilkenny Institute of Higher Education	http://www.kihe.com
Learning Direct	http://www.learningdirect.org/
Library and Information Commission (1)	http://www.lic.gov.uk/publications
Lifelong Adult Education Services, Inc	http://www.lifelongaes.com
Lifelong Guidance Database	http://www.glos.tec.org.uk/guidance/
Local Enterprise Companies (Scotland)	http://www.sconto.demon.co.uk/lec.htm
Lombardy Region, Italy	http://www.regione.lombardia.it
National Association for Educational Guidance for Adults	http://www.ianunwin.demon.co.uk/naega1/
National Association of Colleges and Employers (USA)	http://www.jobweb.org/

Name	URL
National Centre for Guidance in Education	http://ireland.iol.ie/ncge
National Grid for Learning	http://www.ngfl.gov.uk
National Institute for Careers Education and Counselling (NICEC)	http://www.crac.org.uk/nicec.htm
National Organisation for Adult Learning (NIACE)	http://www.niace.org.uk
New Deal, United Kingdom	http://www.newdeal.gov.uk
Redbridge Refugee Forum	http://www.redrefforum.demon.co.uk/
Refugee Council (London)	http://www.gn.apc.org/brcslproject/
RefugeeNet	http://www.refugeenet.org
Social Exclusion Unit (UK)	http://www.open.gov.uk/co/seu/
Scottish Council for Research in Education	http://www.scre.ac.uk
Scottish Office	http://www.scotland.gov.uk
Scottish Refugee Council	http://www.scotref.demon.co.uk
Social Cooperative, Italy	http://www.luzzati.org
Social Cooperative ORSO	http://www.arpnet.it
Superhighways Task Force	http://www.stf.scet.org.uk
Support for Peace and Reconciliation	http://nics.gov.uk/eu/eussppr/progsumm/index.htm
Tennessee State Proposed Plan: Adult Education and Literacy, chapter 9	http://cls.coe.utk.edu/stateplan/chapter_9.html
Tower Hamlets Summer University	http://www.su.net.org
Trades Union Congress (TUC)	http://www.tuc.org.uk
Training and Enterprise Councils (England and Wales)	http://www.tec.co.uk/index.html
United Kingdom government	http://www.open.gov.uk/lmsd/lmsdhome.htm
United States Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration	http://www.doleta.gov/
University for Industry (UfI)	http://www.ufi.org.uk/index.htm
University of East London Centre for Advice, Access and Continuing Education	http://www.uel.ac.uk/central/caace
University of Central Lancashire Career Planning Homepage	http://www.uclan.ac.uk/dfee/titleff.htm
University of Glasgow Department of Adult and Continuing Education	http://www.gla.ac.uk/Acad/AdultEd/Research/Leonardo.html
WEA International Study Circles	http://www.tsl.fi/ifwea/isc